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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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4 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ... GLIMPSES OF GRANDEUR
A reporter's FDR, Chicago to Warm Springs.

5 **THE EDITORS** ... THE ROOSEVELT CENTURY
What that man in the White House did, what he teaches us, who his heirs are—and aren't.
RACISM AND REAGANISM
Now there's a tax incentive for bigotry.
SOLIDARITY NIGHT SPECIAL
The gun lobby is trying to exploit Poland.
JUST FRIENDS
How to trade Awacs for bushwhacks.
NOTEBOOK

7 **CORRESPONDENCE** ... On the Peace Corps, executive pay, and *Reds*.

13 **RONALD STEEL** ... POLAND AND THE GHOST OF YALTA
Europe's division is abominable, but for the superpowers, the alternative could be worse.

16 **HENRY FAIRLIE** ... THE VOICE OF HOPE
From across the Atlantic, Mr. Roosevelt came on the wireless—a large-hearted friend.

20 **JOSEPH ALSOP** ... THE ROOSEVELT WE KNEW
Charming, courageous, mischievous, and good, he was an open man who opened America.

24 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ... ON FILMS: SECOND LOOKS
The New Slick and the New Wave.

25 **ROBERT BRUSTEIN** ... ON THEATER: ARGUING WITH A TANK
A witless, energetic musical, and two books.

27 **BRAD LEITHAUSER** ... BRIDESHEAD RE-REVISITED
Sex and religion are Evelyn Waugh's themes and the filmmaker's challenge.

30 **RICHARD GRENIER** ... INNOCENTS ABROAD
Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba by Paul Hollander

34 **DAVID MCCULLOUGH** ... CIVILITIES OF THE HEART
Philadelphia: Patricians & Philistines, 1900-1950 by John Lukacs

36 **ALLAN M. BRANDT** ... INFERNAL MEDICINE
Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment by James H. Jones

38 **ROBIN W. WINKS** ... MYSTERIES

38 **BRIEF REVIEWS** ... *Fear Itself* by Stefan Kanfer
Reviewed by Frederick Busch
One Third of a Nation edited by Richard Lowitt and Maurine Beasley
Reviewed by Rhoda Lerman

43 **LONDON DIARIST** ... FOUL PLAY

COVER Photograph courtesy of the Milwaukee Journal (October 1932).

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FROM WASHINGTON

Glimpses Of Grandeur

The date is July 5, 1932, just short of 50 years ago. I am back from the Democratic convention in Chicago, where they have nominated a new figure. We don't know too much about him, and TV isn't there to spread the picture. It is up to us to analyze what's happened. "Back from the convention," I write, "newspapermen find themselves eagerly questioned as to the personality of Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt and Democratic prospects."

I mull it over. I have seen something there I can't figure out. Personally, I'm a Norman Thomas man. Poor old Hoover—with a quarter of the people idle, he's hopeless, and the nation is near panic. But Roosevelt? I can't believe him. He looks good, yet he says he wants to balance the budget. I don't know much about economics, but I think that's crazy. Still, I write (with careful impartiality), "The spectacular personal appearance was one of the highlights." Yes, there was something there. "The convention was only lukewarm to the Governor up to that time": the Smith faction was "bitterly hostile," the "large Baker and Ritchie groups unfavorable," the pro-Garner forces "tepid."

So what happened? "His appearance changed all this. His airplane was four hours late. Finally a burst of applause. . . . There appeared in the speaker's rostrum a big man—a smiling, happy man who spoke informally and permitted humor to run through the address." I explain things: "His trip by airplane shattered tradition, as did his mere presence before the convention. He spoke in short, crisp sentences, easily grasped. He urged Progressives to join him. He has been accused of vagueness and generalities. But the personal presence of Governor Roosevelt, following the sensational all-night session the evening before, will probably remain the highlight of the presidential conventions of 1932."

It certainly was. I covered him all during the subsequent campaign. The nation was sinking and he won, of course. Then followed that awful four-month gap, the period from November to March 4, which the lame-duck amendment eliminated. Every bank in the country closed. Then the miracle. In his inaugural address he told us we had nothing to fear but fear itself. He would reopen the banks. The way he tossed his head was reassuring. Walter Lippmann wrote: "In one week the nation, which had lost confidence in everything and everybody, has regained confidence in the government and itself." Banks reopened; people brought back hoarded money. "A second-rate intellect," mused Oliver Wendell Holmes, "but a first-rate personality." FDR could never understand Keynesian economics; but he put it into effect intuitively. He forgot those silly promises to balance the budget. A new song arrived—"Happy Days Are Here Again!" I saw the 1932 convention rock to it. Let historians argue; after all, it was personality.

Let's skip to 1944. Another election. This time Republicans may win and how they want to! They hate *that man*. It is almost pathological. He has brought government from Wall Street to Washington. He has asserted social responsibility. He has reminded the Supreme Court of its place. Then Pearl Harbor, and now Dewey. Maybe Dewey is the man; he is personable, a reformer, a fine baritone. All summer FDR won't budge from the White House except to make "nonpolitical" trips. But now he will make his first campaign speech, to the Teamsters' convention here in Washington. Dewey's special campaign train is run out onto a siding,where he listens to the speech. Republican speech-writers are ready to rebut every argument.

On September 23, 1944, America adjourns after supper to the radio. I am in a glittering Washington hotel ballroom. Teamsters are big, brawny men, and they have been on the town all day and show signs of convention conviviality. "Well," says Roosevelt, "here we are together again!" A great burst of welcome as he proceeds: "After four years . . . and what years they have been!" He has established instant rapport; now he can give them the statistics. He doesn't. His big, actor's face takes on a look of mock sorrow. He has been attacked, he says, he has been assailed before, but now Republican leaders are not content with attacks "upon me, or my wife, or my sons . . . [pause] they now include my little dog Fala."

Titters run through the big hall. He denies that Fala was left on an Aleutian island and a destroyer sent after him. The audience relishes the joke; Roosevelt elaborates, piles it up, milks it. Fala, he says, is outraged at the supposed expense: "being a Scottie, his Scotch soul was furious."

It was the most successful political speech I have ever heard. Poor Fala, says Roosevelt, "he has not been the same dog since!" The nation chuckles; some of the Teamsters collapse. As for Dewey, poor chap, I get a full account from my colleague, Roscoe Drummond, who is on the train and notes the funereal feeling that descended. Dewey recast his whole campaign.

And now a final glimpse. FDR is still President. On Inauguration Day, January 20, 1945, the simple ceremony is held outside the White House. The Allies are beating Hitler. It jars me even now as I remember it—Jimmy Roosevelt and a guard lifting the helpless President to the lectern. There he stands and he is instantly himself: his buoyant voice takes charge. We are winning the war, he says. It is all right.

So that's the story. Some 80 days after the inaugural comes an emergency call to Speaker Sam Rayburn's hideaway on Capitol Hill. The election is long past. Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin have met at Yalta. All is well. Is the Vice President there? Yes, he's there. *Let him come to the White House at once. . . . Urgent!*

Truman hurries off. FDR picked Truman; he picked General Marshall, Eisenhower, and Admiral King, too. People condescend to Truman. At this point he does not even know the secret of the atomic bomb. When he sees Eleanor Roosevelt at the White House, he knows the truth. The tragic word has come from Warm Springs. This former haberdasher does not know what to say. He stammers, is there anything he can do for her? She replies steadily, "Is there anything we can do for *you*? You are the one in trouble now."

And so in no time the telltale line of the curious forms in front of the picket fence of the White House, the line that always appears here at moments of high drama in Washington, looking in between the rails, awed and silent.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

JANUARY 27, 1982

THE ROOSEVELT CENTURY

January 30 is the centenary of the birth of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The nearly 37 years since he died have not been a hospitable time for American icons, past or present. So it is remarkable that there has been no dimming of his luster. He continues to be large in a way that none of his successors (and only a few of his predecessors) can begin to match. He is still the smiling demigod in the photograph on the following page—jaunty and confident, an infinitely reassuring father, a warm sun radiating blissful hope. His biographers—Schlesinger, Burns, Freidel, Leuchtenberg—take his greatness as a given, an indisputable fact that needs no defending, only elucidating. Some revisionist historian may yet try to revise him down to size, but the popular verdict is not likely to change. That verdict puts him on a par with Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln as a creator of American democracy. Franklin D. Roosevelt is the 20th century's addition to the roster of Founding Fathers.

At the beginning, enlightened opinion expected little from the squire of Hyde Park. The editors of this journal were among those he gradually, but decisively, won over. "No doubt many of Mr. Roosevelt's progressive supporters think his program really embodies a 'new deal,'" they wrote on the eve of the 1932 election. "But it embodies nothing that reaches to the heart of the existing system." A vote for Norman Thomas, the Socialist candidate, was urged instead. By 1936 the editors were recommending a vote for Roosevelt only if the contest with Landon looked close, and for Thomas (or the Communists' Earl Browder!) if FDR seemed to have it in the bag. But in 1940 and 1944 the magazine didn't bother to wait for the campaign. Both times it endorsed the President as soon as he was renominated. FDR had made himself the indispensable man—and to see how he did it, one need only look at the America he inherited and the America he left behind.

In 1932 the United States was bankrupt in every way. With millions out of work and unsheltered from the bitter winds of depression, the official ideology of the government in Washington was a mixture of self-deluded Babbitry and paralyzed despair. Abroad the country counted for little. Wilson's internationalist legacy had been wholly squandered. (Militarily, the U.S. was very far from being No. 1; shortly before FDR's inauguration, General Douglas MacArthur, then Army Chief of Staff, rated it at No. 17.) When FDR died, on April 12, 1945, the Allies were on the verge of victory over Hitler, and the United States was indisputably the most powerful nation in history. At the root of that victory was something deeper than military strength. The country had transformed itself, under President Roosevelt's leadership, into a working and workable democratic society, with the means and the will to provide its citizens with a decent life. Did the New Deal" reach to the heart of the existing system"? Perhaps not. But before 1932, that system didn't have a heart. FDR gave it one.

Many of the fights that stirred such passions in Roosevelt's day seem trivial today. The NRA's blue eagle, the court-packing plan, the supposed danger of a third term—these are now as quaint as an old ration book. And FDR's moral vision was sometimes cloudy: witness his internment of Japanese-Americans at the start of World War II and his failure to grasp the full

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horror of the Nazi atrocity against European Jewry.

Looking back, though, what most stands out today is the extraordinary creativity of his stewardship. Institution after institution that he helped bring into being—Social Security, unemployment insurance, the modern labor movement, the minimum wage—permanently changed American society for the better. Were some New Deal programs (such as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, which FDR thought would protect bad banks along with good ones) passed with only the reluctant consent of the President? No matter. Roosevelt created the New Deal's exhilarating atmosphere of fearless experimentation, and Roosevelt deserves the credit for its accomplishments.

PHOTOGRAPH OF FDR AT HYDE PARK, JULY 4, 1937, BY UPI

In foreign policy, FDR, who had campaigned for the League of Nations as the Democratic vice-presidential candidate in 1920, came to office as a member of neither the internationalist nor the isolationist camp. But he gradually educated the public to the need for a strong, active American role in the world. In his willingness to act he was always ahead of public opinion. He saw, when others did not, that liberty and democracy could not survive in America if they were expunged abroad. He understood that moral purity was not sufficient for liberty's defense against aggressive totalitarianism. Against massive opposition at home, he urged military preparedness and furnished the Allies with weapons with which to defend themselves and our common interests. It was thanks to his foresight that what he called "the American people in their righteous might" were as ready as they were for war when war came; and it is part of his legacy that since the war ended the American people have not again been seriously tempted—until our time, that is—by the kind of isolationism that he had inherited. When Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, FDR knew that "the peace of all countries is in danger." He proceeded to dismantle the structure of America's historic neutrality. He would have known what to do with reference to Poland today.

This worldly, happy man, so utterly without unctuous piety, was in fact a spiritual leader. "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," he said—and the country nearly wept with relief. He never entertained the slightest doubt that he could make the United States a stronger, more decent place. Writing in THE NEW REPUBLIC on July 22, 1940, Hamilton Basso, with startling prescience, caught the essence of Roosevelt's contribution as well as anyone ever has, before or since. FDR's place in history is secure, he wrote,

> but only if the opponents of republicanism do not write the future history books. And here, in this qualification, we come to what may well be the true greatness—perhaps the accidental greatness—of Franklin D. Roosevelt. He emerges, out of the fog of a stormy time, as one of the great spokesmen of democracy—giving new articulation to those old and simple ideas which, if democracy is to survive, must truly be weapons.
>
> He came to the Presidency in a black moment of a black, black time. Democracy, as a form of government, was being laughed at and derided. Many of the intellectuals now loving it so noisily were . . . writing of America as jungle, America as wasteland, America as washed-up. There was a red dawn over Moscow that had not yet turned out to be merely a reflection of the bombed towns and burning villages of Finland and, at home, the desperate and the hungry were listening to Huey Long.
>
> It was then, in 1933, that Franklin D. Roosevelt began to carry the country forward to the modern stage of democratic realization—to the point, that is, where the immediate and direct interest of the government in the welfare of all its citizens is also recognized as a democratic principle.

That principle, it need hardly be added, is precisely what is under attack on the hundredth anniversary of Roosevelt's birth. It only enriches the irony that the leader of that attack is the man who, by quoting this greatest of Democrats in his acceptance speech to the 1980 Republican convention, confirmed the place of

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE PEACE CORPS TODAY

To the editors:

Your recent article on the Peace Corps ("Peace Corps Imperiled," by Michael A. Lerner, TNR, November 25, 1981) unfortunately trivializes an important issue for the future of that organization. The kind of work volunteers are assigned to do necessarily reflects both the requests from the host country and the capacity of the Peace Corps to fill those requests. Since the requests consistently exceed the resources of the Peace Corps, volunteer assignments also reflect a decision on the part of Peace Corps management about which requests to fill first.

It is in that context that I was (and still am) concerned about the Peace Corps's education volunteers. The Peace Corps has too often said yes to education programs because it's so easy to find volunteers for them. In one English-speaking African country, we had been providing teachers of English for 22 years. Upon analysis it became clear that there were relatively large numbers of qualified local English teachers (many of them taught by former volunteers) who were without jobs while we were sending in Peace Corps English teachers at what locally unemployed people viewed as scab wages. This should have been a classic opportunity to phase out Peace Corps volunteers. But when we proposed to stop sending them, the ministry of education, which had its own empire building and budgetary problems, resisted. (It is probably still requesting volunteers today.) Nonetheless, I thought then and I still think that it made sense for us to direct more of our limited resources to fisheries, food production, maternal and infant health, sanitary water production, grain storage, energy production, and other contributors to meeting basic human needs.

If focusing on these areas is "radical chic," I plead guilty. It is on these areas where the World Bank, the Society for International Development, the Overseas Development Council,the Club of Rome, the International Labor Organization, the Congress of the United States, and the Carter Administration placed great attention. It seemed only reasonable that the Peace Corps might try to catch up to the parade which it had led for so long.

Perhaps, as the article suggests, the Peace Corps merely needs spiritual leadership with a prophetic vision; yet I somehow doubt that we will get this from Ronald Reagan, in spite of Mr. Lerner's clarion call. The Peace Corps could benefit greatly from a reasoned and thoughtful analysis of its role in a world which has changed greatly from the days of Peace Corps founding. Too bad such an analysis was not undertaken by THE NEW REPUBLIC.

Sam Brown
Director, ACTION, 1977-81
Denver, Colorado

GREEN WITH ENVY

To the editors:

Mark Green's essay on "The Gargantuan Salaries of Business Executives" (TNR, January 6 & 13, 1982) is remarkable. Nowhere does Green argue that such high salaries 1) injure those who receive them, morally or in any other way; or 2) injure the common good. What he does suggest is that envy of the good fortune of others ought to overpower the American public but probably won't; the public, he says, "is not likely to feel resentment even of the undeserving rich."

To be sure, the aesthetic and moral sense of some Americans, like Mark Green, seems to be offended. But why? For what good reason? Green is not offended by high salaries paid to athletes or media stars or entrepreneurs. He is seemingly not offended by "gargantuan" rewards to authors of best sellers and long-selling textbooks, builders of their own businesses, movie and television producers, famous surgeons, and others. What seems to bother him is that "today's managers are more technicians than pioneers." He does not place as much value on managerial talent as on these other skills. Why not? He fails to offer a reason.

A society more resolutely governed than ours by a stoic or puritan ethic, determined that too much wealth is not good for the soul, would certainly do as Mark Green suggests. I would favor that, on religious grounds, although not on practical, this-worldly grounds. It is not surprising that corporations lure talent from one another by the sorts of techniques Green describes, and others which he does not. A few good decisions of managers of genius are worth far more to a large company than the latter pay in compensation. In cyclical industries, this is as true for bad years as for good; indeed, bad years on the profit charts are often caused by the expenses involved in setting a new and—everyone hopes—profitable course, whose profits a successor may reap in the future.

It would be ideal if corporate managers were as ascetic as Green, however. A world full of Mark Greens would be a prospect worthy of contemplation.

Michael Novak
Washington, D.C.

SEEING RED

To the editors:

After I told a friend of my distaste for *Reds* ("On Films: Warren Beatty's Triumph," TNR, December 16, 1981), he informed me he'd seen the trailer for it and had already decided not to see it. It then struck me that that was a good description of Warren Beatty's grossly overblown and overtouted film—a trailer for Beatty's conscience. Uncomfortable with filming reality in the name of raising sociopolitical awareness as his sister Shirley MacLaine has done (*The Other Half of the Sky*), Beatty can do little more than blow up politics to the proportions of a Harlequin romance. It didn't impress me (but then I hated *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and loved *Zabriskie Point*). True, Kosinski is a brilliant touch, and even Keaton occasionally suggests a woman capable of understanding, if not uttering, an idea; but I find Beatty unbelievable (he has never risen above his casting in *Shampoo*), the story full of ludicrous holes (did Louise really walk across Finland in the winter without mussing her hair?), the music awfully Hollywood, the characters thin and predictable, the effort, though large, simply a measure of Beatty's ambitions and limitations. As if Reed's place in American history weren't enough obscured, Beatty has once and for all made it prime time meat. Worse, he has packaged the passions of ideas, ideals, and history like a quarter pounder with cheese. Hold the Mao!

Paul B. Wiener
Stonybrook, New York

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Franklin D. Roosevelt in the pantheon of nonpartisan American heroes. We have no quarrel with that. Ronald Reagan's astute decision to drape himself in the Roosevelt mantle was a backhanded tribute to the breadth of FDR's appeal and the universality of FDR's legacy. But it was also an audacious piece of political larceny—one that made skillful use of the superficial resonances between the two men. Like FDR in 1932, Reagan in 1980 was elected more for who he wasn't than for who he was. Like FDR, Reagan faced an incumbent, an uninspiring engineer-President, in a time of economic distress. Like FDR, Reagan offered a politics of expansiveness, hope, and possibility against a politics of scarcity and resignation. And, like FDR, Reagan as President began his term with a dynamic flurry of proposals for economic recovery, demonstrating a masterful sway over Congress in the process, and promising deep and lasting change in the relation of the American government to the American people.

BUT THE similarities only make the differences, which are far more meaningful, stand out in sharper relief. None of FDR's successors have been his peers, so perhaps it is unfair to hold any of them to his standard. But Mr. Reagan, the "Republican FDR," has invited the comparison himself; and he has lately provided a pertinent text in a remarkable public television interview with Ben Wattenberg. Because it was broadcast on Christmas night—at the beginning of the one week each year when the press and public are at their least attentive—it passed almost unnoticed. In the interview, Mr. Wattenberg asked Mr. Reagan to explain his journey from New Deal Democrat to conservative Republican.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's true that when I cast my first vote, at age 21, it was for Franklin Delano Roosevelt, his first election. And it's true, if I look back, that—because, remember, this was the depths of the Depression. I got out of school and sought my place in the world of work in 1932, when the government was putting ads on the air, on radio, urging people not to leave home looking for work because there was no work. Stay home and wait and the government would do something for you. I got a job. I didn't stay home. But I don't mean it wasn't real—the problem, 25 percent unemployment.

MR. WATTENBERG: This was the radio announcer job?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Now, I think in that whole era, it was a great traumatic experience for the nation, and so we had a kind of thought that we had a sick patient and medicine must be applied. But the Roosevelt that I voted for had promised to cut federal spending by 25 percent, had promised to return to the states and local communities authority and autonomy that had been unjustly seized by the federal government. . . .

MR. WATTENBERG: And you supported him during all those years, right?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes, and there was no question about his being a great war leader for this nation. And I think all of our attention turned to that. But, in the meantime, my own analysis is that people attracted to government and to government positions in those years, in many instances, did not view the medicine as temporary. If you remember, I was assailed during the campaign for saying that many of the New Dealers actually espoused what today has become an epithet—fascism—in that they spoke admiringly of how Mussolini had made the trains run on time. In other words, they saw in what he was doing a planned economy—private ownership, but government management of that ownership and that economy. Ickes, Harold Ickes, in his book, said that what we were striving for was a kind of modified form of communism. Well, I don't believe that that was really in Roosevelt's mind, and I think that, had he lived, and with the war over, we would have seen him using government the other way. Roosevelt at one time made a statement that the federal government had to get out of the business of—we didn't call it welfare then, we called it relief. But, as he explained, that the federal government was not the proper agency for that, and that the manner in which it was being done was demoralizing to the people that you were trying to help.

MR. WATTENBERG: I'm a little bit turned around here.

Well, so are we—and so, dizzyingly, is the history of the New Deal. It scarcely seems possible that Mr. Reagan so profoundly misunderstands the era in which he came to maturity. One of the things that era teaches is that the essential difference between democracy and tyranny lies not in whether public or private entities manage the economy but in who owns, as it were, the government itself. Does a blend of private ownership and public planning really constitute fascism or communism? If so, then the only question is which of America's allies have gone fascist and which have gone communist—to say nothing of America itself.

APART from the fractured political science, the interview illuminates two facets of President Reagan's mind and spirit that make a powerful contrast with President Roosevelt's. One has to do with empathy, the other with ideology.

Mr. Reagan understands perfectly that a business executive might need a government tax incentive to encourage him to invest. But he cannot see how a government loan to a college student from a lower-middle-class family or a nutrition allotment to a pregnant woman or a newborn child can be anything but demoralizing. He divides the country into producers and parasites, and the latter category includes not only those who for some reason cannot follow his example ("I got a job") but also the government itself. Roosevelt saw democratic government as the collective instrument by which the whole society could renew itself; for Reagan, that is the province only of the owners of

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wealth, and, grudgingly, of local authorities. Roosevelt, who began life with much, could empathize with those who had little. Reagan reverses the equation. Roosevelt, to use an old-fashioned phrase, had a social conscience. Reagan seems to have none.

Mr. Reagan is right that Governor Roosevelt, in his first campaign for the presidency, promised to reduce the federal budget. Indeed, FDR's initial program of massive cuts in government spending and massive relief for the jobless was an early instance of voodoo economics. But he was not wedded to any one approach. His blithe disdain for dogma, the despair of some of his advisers, was one of the keys to the success of his Administration. His was an ideology of values, not of mechanisms. During the first campaign, even as he was calling for a balanced budget, he let his principled pragmatism shine through. "It is common sense to take a method and try it," he said. "If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something." And when the first New Deal, the New Deal of NRA and managed scarcity, failed to cure the Depression, out it went, and in came the second New Deal, the New Deal of social reform. Mr. Reagan, too, was elected partly out of a widespread sense that he would "above all, try something." But he seems to have only a single something to try. Last week, after new figures showed the unemployment rate rapidly approaching 9 percent, this was his lame defense of his economic program: "I don't know any other way to do it." He is a prisoner of an ideology—the wrong ideology at that.

The Democrats, willy-nilly, are FDR's true political legatees. They must build a house of their own in which to hang his portrait, and we have no doubt that in time they will. But for the moment they are like the listless heirs of some departed magnate, picking sadly over the threadbare furniture in a cobwebby mansion. They are shaken by the Republicans' success in building a coalition of the haves and the almost-haves—and they deserved to be shaken. As they grope for answers, their duty—the duty of all of us who share their values—is not only to defend Roosevelt's legacy but also to separate the wheat from the chaff in the Democratic programs that came after the New Deal. The successes of the New Frontier and the Great Society, from Medicare to the space program, were those that engaged the imaginations and interests of the entire society. Where there were failures, political or substantive, they mostly came in programs that divided the country into its economic and ethnic components and then proceeded to "target" the benefits.

The great lesson that Franklin D. Roosevelt's career holds for his political descendants is to be found in the inclusiveness and universality of his social vision. The Democrats will err if they waste too much time genuflecting to the "private sector"—or any sector. Nor will they gain much for themselves or the country if they put too much stock in "compassion." Compassion is an excellent private virtue, but in public affairs it is too readily jettisoned, even by people of good will, if it is seen to clash with a broader common interest. The Democrats must learn to respect the real discontents of the American middle class—the fear of crime, the disgust with lousy schools, the creeping sense of social and economic disintegration. There are signs that the Democrats are beginning to do so. Finally, the Democrats must learn to unite the potential strength of the American underclass with that of the hard-pressed working people who are currently underwriting the Reagan Administration's experiment in economic royalism. These are the people who abstain in growing numbers with each succeeding election. They are the present equivalent of FDR's Forgotten Man. The Democratic Party can bring them back only with a political creed that stresses their potential as functioning members of a larger society, not as marginal objects of charity. But one-third of the American nation is no longer "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished." That was FDR's achievement. Roosevelt's heirs will conduct themselves as if this advance was never made at the peril of turning the Democratic Party into a permanent minority party and, at that, largely a party of the minorities.

The next great wave of political and social reform in this country, we hope, will understand the value of human capital, not just the kind that buys machines; it will explore the possibilities of democracy in the workplace, not just in the electoral arena; it will look for ways to limit bureaucracies, not just protect them; it will use equity as a spur to productivity, not just as a tool of distributive justice. Roosevelt's America was open and unfinished; so is ours. More important than any particular scheme, more important even than any particular goal, will be the largeness of democratic spirit that was Franklin D. Roosevelt's distinctive and effortless gift.

Racism And Reaganism

The Reagan Administration has established a new record for cynicism and social reaction. On January 8, late on a Friday afternoon (the timing obviously calculated to minimize attention and outrage), the Justice and Treasury Departments announced that the U.S. government henceforth would not challenge the tax-exempt status of private schools which exclude blacks. This Administration, whose leader once proclaimed that tax laws should not be used to accomplish social objectives, was reversing more than a decade of federal policy and, in effect, establishing a government subsidy for bigotry in education.

Spokesmen for the Justice and the Treasury Departments denied, of course, that the Administration

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was encouraging discrimination. They claimed that Congress had never provided the Internal Revenue Service with authority to withhold tax exemptions from private schools on the basis of discriminatory conduct. The argument is filled with falsehood. In the first place, Congress did pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibiting use of government assistance to institutions practicing racial discrimination. Do tax exemptions constitute federal assistance? Of course they do; in fact, they mean the difference between survival and failure for many small, all-white schools, which is why the segregationists have been so active through their right-wing political allies in trying to reverse the IRS policy.

CONGRESS HAS demonstrated in other ways that it does not support tax breaks for segregated schools. The IRS began its anti-discriminatory policy in 1971 and Congress has not acted to reverse it. Moreover, Congress did overturn a 1978 court ruling that permitted segregated social clubs to have tax-exempt status. The Senate report on that legislation cited as precedent the U.S. Supreme Court ruling upholding the IRS policy on schools, much as the Supreme Court had cited the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Clearly the reason that Congress had not explicitly enacted a law forbidding tax exemptions to segregated schools is that it didn't think it had to. Clearly it believed that the United States had passed far beyond the point where government could contemplate actively aiding school segregation.

An Administration that was not looking for ways to please racists, that profoundly believed in racial equality, would never have reached so far into legalistic sophistry as this Administration has in order to do what it has done. To the contrary, even if it thought the IRS policy had a weak legislative base, such an Administration would have leaned over backward to find ways to sustain the policy. At a minimum, such an Administration would have introduced legislation to repair the weakness. This Administration did nothing of the kind. It was only when (despite its best-laid public relations plans) an uproar did arise over its action that the Administration came up with a promise of legislation to restore IRS's policy. But that's a sham. The Administration knows full well that in the present conservative climate such a bill will be hard to enact. The probability is that the Administration will not put any muscle behind it in Congress, and then will use Congress's failure to pass it as evidence that it was right all along in stopping the IRS from withholding tax exemptions from all-white schools.

Thanks to the Administration ruling, there is likely to be an ugly flowering of racist private educational institutions all over the country. And schools that have admitted a few token blacks in order to maintain their tax-exempt status are likely to expel them and revert to open bigotry. One of the Administration's subsidiary actions on January 8 was to drop legal action against Bob Jones University in South Carolina and Goldsboro Christian Schools, Inc., in North Carolina (located, uncoincidentally, in the home states of Strom Thurmond and Jesse Helms), which traditionally have openly acknowledged a policy of racial segregation.

The decision to grant tax exemptions to racist schools was not made without White House connivance. White House officials acknowledge that the President knew of it in advance. It is time to hold Ronald Reagan personally responsible for his Administration's racial policies, instead of assuming that he is too nice, or too uninvolved, to be a party to what has been occurring. An Administration cannot appoint a rank incompetent to become head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission without the President's being personally responsible. Or fire such an eminent figure as Arthur Fleming as head of the Civil Rights Commission. Or decide not to seek or enforce school busing orders in the courts. Or refuse to oppose legislation removing Supreme Court jurisdiction in school segregation cases. Or weaken affirmative action policies. Or water down the Voting Rights Act.

Last June President Reagan pledged to the NAACP that "my Administration will root out any case of government discrimination against minorities and uphold and enforce the laws that protect them. I emphasize that we will not retreat on the nation's commitment to equal treatment of all citizens." The record strongly indicates that Ronald Reagan lied when he said those words, and it further indicates that not only is he insensitive to the plight of minorities, but he is the ally of prejudice as well.

SOLIDARITY NIGHT SPECIAL

Like a blind man groping at an elephant, the National Rifle Association has examined the Polish crisis and identified the problem to be repressive gun control. To be sure, the NRA recognizes that other rights corresponding to provisions in the United States Constitution have been violated by the Jaruzelski regime. But, "when all intellectual debate has ended, when all appeals for reasonableness have failed, when the only choice remaining is whether to submit or resist, then the overriding question becomes whether the people have the *means* to resist." Thus reads an "open letter to all Polish Americans" that has been published in newspapers across the country since December 18.

This argument for liberty's last line of defense bears little resemblance to reality either for Poland or for the U.S. That freedom to own firearms should be placed on the same level of importance as the writ of habeas corpus, free speech, and freedom to assemble—all recently withdrawn by the Polish government, and all

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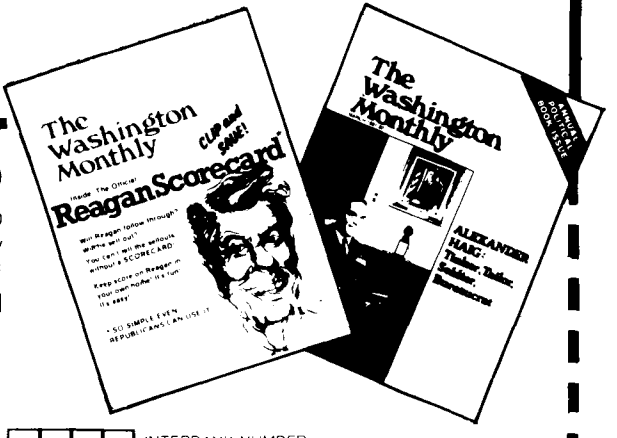

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duly noted on the NRA's checklist of essential rights—is an affront to the Solidarity movement, which has been as impressive for its nonviolence as it has been for commitment to the working people of Poland. Solidarity has not needed firearms to make the world stand up and take notice. And Saturday Night Specials ringing through the streets of Gdansk wouldn't have nearly as great an effect against the Polish government as a tougher U.S. response to the crisis, such as a Soviet grain embargo—which all honest conservatives, including gun-toting farmers, should support.

The most exploitative and absurd theme of the letter, however, is "It Can Happen Here." The "right" that advocates of gun control seek to restrict—the right to bear arms—is at best outdated and impractical, and at worst fictitious. We do not mean to enter into the constitutional dispute here. (See Paul Fussell's "A Well Regulated Militia," TNR, June 27, 1981). But we can point to several thriving Western democracies that have managed to curb ownership of firearms—primarily handguns—without compromising more essential liberties in the process. Citizens of Japan, Sweden, Great Britain, Canada, Switzerland, Israel, and West Germany have passed gun laws tougher than those in the U.S. without turning into totalitarian states. In the process, they have kept the number of handgun murders breathtakingly low. In 1979 there were 48 in Japan, 42 in West Germany, 8 in Great Britain, and 10,728 in the United States. Last year, the President nearly became a statistic himself. If the NRA really had faith in the presidency, which is continually threatened by the right to bear arms, or the institutions of American government, against which it insists on preserving "the means to resist," it wouldn't make unpatriotic comparisons between the political climates in the U.S. and Poland.

Just Friends

For months the Administration ballyhooed the close friendship between the United States and Saudi Arabia and insisted on the need to reinforce it with Awacs. The Administration won that argument, and ever since we have been scanning the horizon for Saudi demonstrations of this friendship. Here's what has happened. On November 10, 1981, the Saudi foreign minister denounced Oman for participating in joint military maneuvers (Operation Bright Star) with the U.S. In early December the *Washington Post* reported that the Saudis had offered Oman $1.2 billion if they would renounce military ties with the U.S. and deny the U.S. base rights to Masirah Island. Finally, after Mr. Reagan had been warned about Libyan hit squads and had taken steps to isolate Colonel Qaddafi, Saudi Arabia announced on December 31 its intention to resume diplomatic relations with Libya. Libya had broken them off a few years ago when the Saudis proved insufficiently anti-imperialist, asking the U.S. for air protection during the Yemen crisis. The U.S., friendly as ever, had responded by sending American-flown Awacs to patrol Saudi skies. Now that the Saudis were going to acquire their own Awacs, they could reserve their friendly feelings for others. They and the Libyans are concentrating on their own strategic consensus. (They announced that their renewed ties were designed to "unify Arab action against the common enemy.") The Administration, which is never at a loss for words about the failure of friends like Germany, Israel, or Japan to live up to its expectations, had nary a word of criticism for Riyadh. But perhaps even this discreet silence was an affront to Prince Fahd. He abruptly cancelled his already postponed visit to Washington scheduled for January 19, leaving the State Department officials flustered and flailing for a way to obscure what even they can't deny, namely that the Saudis wear the pants in this strategic mismarriage. So for the U.S., it is back to the harem, until Prince Fahd summons us again for another favor.

Notebook

☐ IN A BOX included in his article, "Poland: Operation Whitewash" (TNR, January 6 & 13, 1982), Abraham Brumberg commented on the reported death of Tadeusz Mazowiecki, editor of the now-defunct *Solidarity Weekly*, and on the arrest of Marek Edelman, one of the leaders of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Mr. Brumberg informs us that he is relieved now to have learned that the report on Mr. Mazowiecki was false, and that Dr. Edelman has now been released. In a recent statement, Jaruzelski's press spokesman, Jerzy Urban, spoke acidly about "wildly exaggeraged reports of atrocities in Poland, citing in particular the case of Mazowiecki." If Mr. Urban and his chief would like to put an end to the rumors that have indeed proliferated in the Western press, all they need do is provide reporters with direct access to information, let them see and interview anyone they please (including Lech Walesa and all the other detainees), and lift the remaining restrictions on the movement of journalists in Poland. Above all, let them put an end to the martial law under which the whole Polish population still languishes.

☐ A CRACKLING CONTROVERSY has engulfed H'wood in the wake of a hush decision to nix Ronald (*Brother Rat and a Baby, The Cattle Queen of Montana*) Reagan for the Screen Actors Guild's highest honor. When a page one

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yarn in the December 18 *Variety* revealed that the SAG board had thumbs-downed the recommendation of its own awards committee, the lid was blown off a politically motivated conspiracy against the onetime six-term union chief. Despite the fact that the board normally nods through committee recommendations sans discussion, SAG professionals launched a socko campaign to kayo the plan. Gifting the Prez with the prize "would alienate us from the rest of the labor movement and subject us to embarrassment and ridicule," rasped Kim Fellner, SAG Info Director and maestro of the anti-Reagan cabal, in a toughly worded missive to the union's board. Reagan supporters were livid. One of them, Charlton (*Ben Hur, Planet of the Apes*) Heston, another ex-SAG prexy, labeled the decision "a grievous error." Heston, who's "like that" with *el Presidente*, warned against politicizing the union. Reagan, who in the 1950s supported banning Communists and actors who refused to cooperate with the House Un-American Activities Committee from SAG, has so far kept mum on the matter.

☐ INQUIRY, the lively libertarian semi-monthly, has moved to Washington. We worried that the magazine's departure from the shores of San Francisco Bay, where Pacific breezes carry off what little governmental stench drifts in from the East, boded ill for libertarian principles. We needn't have. When a TNR staffer dropped by recently to welcome *Inquiry* editor Glenn Garvin and his staff to Washington, he overheard one unseen editor say to another, "In a truly libertarian society, there's no such thing as blackmail. It's just free-market barter." Mr. Garvin shouted back, "Fellas, we've got company. . . ." Our staffer returned convinced that libertarians really do have more fun.

☐ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "Summing up this Democratic situation, all I can say is that the Roosevelt stoppers have not yet got Roosevelt stopped. I believe he can be stopped, because the really impressive and influential party leaders would prefer almost any other available candidate" (TRB, January 27, 1932).

Why the division of Europe suits the superpowers.

POLAND AND THE GHOST OF YALTA

BY RONALD STEEL

A SPECTER AGAIN haunts Europe. Not the specter of communism, as Marx and Engels once wrote, for Soviet-style communism is scorned and discredited throughout the continent. It is the specter of Yalta that dominates European politics today, the specter of the unresolved legacy of World War II. For years it has lain dormant. Now it has been focused and dramatized by the events in Poland.

Ever since 1945, the Poles, like the other peoples of Eastern Europe, have been saddled with a government they did not choose through free elections. The fact that free elections were rarely held throughout much of that area, outside of Czechoslovakia, does not mitigate the indignity of their situation.

In addition to being unrepresentative, the Polish government also happens to be—unlike, for example, the Communist government of Hungary—grossly corrupt and incompetent. It is not surprising that the Polish people should want something better. Their efforts to improve the quality of their lives, to participate in decisions made in their name, and to break the hold of an autocratic dictatorship have won the admiration of people everywhere.

In a bureaucratized world, Solidarity, with its touches of syndicalism and even anarchism, seemed a triumph of the people over the state. Even governments that abhor and would forcibly put down such actions within their own frontiers have publicly praised the Polish workers' movement. Such governmental praise, however, is largely for reasons of state rather than for reasons of the heart.

What makes the Polish case different is not only that the Poles wanted to be free to elect their own government—an inalienable right all too often alienated in the world today and, for that matter, in Polish history—but also to throw off the Soviet yoke. The Russians run a nasty empire kept together only by military occupation and the fear of force. In their effort to shed Soviet imperialism and the incompetence of their own Communist rulers, the Poles deserve our admiration and, insofar as possible, our support.

But there are sharp limitations on the kind of support we can offer. The decision by the Polish military—in conjunction with the discredited Communist Party and the Russians—to suppress the Solidarity movement has dramatized certain ambiguities. One is the

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fact that Polish recruits have remained loyal to their offices, even when it meant turning against factory workers very much like themselves. Another is that the one thing the Reagan Administration was expecting, and which some members of the Administration seemed almost to welcome, has not happened—that is, a Soviet invasion. The Russians so far have managed to keep this an essentially Polish matter, no matter how much they may have orchestrated it.

It is easy enough for American officials and editorial writers to berate the Europeans for not breaking trade relations with Moscow. It might be less easy if American workers were as dependent for their jobs on Communist markets as are West European workers. It might also be easier if the Administration were able either to demonstrate that sanctions will work or to be less hypocritical in its actions. Its refusal to send food to Warsaw while selling wheat to Moscow—as columnist Mary McGrory has put it, feeding the Russians while starving the Poles—seems inspired by something other than high principle.

WHAT IS HAPPENING in Poland is sad; it is unfair; it is outrageous. We have every right to denounce it. Not because our own hands are totally clean—for they certainly are not, in places like El Salvador and Chile—but in the name of an offended human decency and dignity. We should speak up against oppression wherever it occurs and whoever commits it, holding up the same standards to ourselves that we do to others.

The Polish drama—one of an aroused people against the power of an oppressive state apparatus—would be inspiring wherever it took place. It is complicated in this case, as Polish matters usually are, by geography and cold war politics. Poland's position between Germany and Russia has traditionally made it an area of contention. What happens in Poland inevitably sucks in the major powers that flank her. The Polish question has historically been a European one. Now it is an international question as well.

The other complication, of course, is the struggle between communism and Western liberalism, between Russia and the West. Poland represents not only a breakdown of the Communist economic system, but a failure of Russia's ability to control events within its own empire. To be sure, "order" of a sort is being restored in Poland. But modern societies cannot function for long under bayonets and martial law. Nor can an empire be held together in this manner. The Polish uprising is another stage in the gradual decay of Moscow's East European empire.

The question is not whether such decay is taking place, but the manner in which it shall be managed and the dangers that any sudden upheaval might pose. Great powers do not normally treat with equanimity the collapse of their empires, particularly when it takes place on their frontiers. It is one thing for the Russians to lose countries like Egypt and Somalia overnight, when third world leaders ungratefully decide to switch benefactors. It is something else to lose Poland, the thoroughfare for so many invasions from the West, two of them within the memory of most Russians.

Thus the drama taking place in Poland is not simply one of the good guys against the bad, of Solidarity against an autocratic and corrupt regime. And it is not just one that involves the Russians and the Poles. It is also a drama of diplomacy, international finance, spheres of influence, and balances of power. This is not an inspirational story. It is even a bit sordid. But it is unavoidable, for it involves the stability of the European state system and many of the institutions that govern the cold war world.

This is the reason why, although everyone sympathizes with the Solidarity movement, virtually no responsible Western official wanted it to take control of the Polish state. Not the bankers in Dusseldorf, London, and New York, who are holding some $27 billion in promissory notes from the Polish government. Not the Catholic Church, which long ago worked out an arrangement with Polish Communists and fears restrictions on its activities in Eastern Europe. Not foreign offices on both sides of the Iron Curtain, which have seen the advantages of ostpolitik and do not want to anger Moscow unnecessarily. Not officials of NATO and the Warsaw Pact, who have accommodated themselves to a Europe divided into manageable halves.

The simple truth is that there is not a lot that the West can do about Poland—other, perhaps, than financing an incompetently managed economy. And a further truth is that any radical political change in Poland would have incalculable consequences for the political balance in Europe.

Although Solidarity began by seeking relatively limited changes, the revolution—and a revolution it certainly was—developed a momentum of its own. No one knows where it would have stopped. Quite possibly with the destruction of the Communist Party's monopoly of power and even the withdrawal of Poland from the Warsaw Pact. This is one thing the Russians cannot now allow, so long as they are capable of preventing it. And no matter how much the West might welcome this emotionally, it also poses a great many dangers.

IF THE SOVIETS were able to prevent it by force, we would be back where we started, indeed, where we have been since 1945. If they were not able, then the liberation movement would almost certainly spread throughout Eastern Europe. Freedom, after all, is contagious. The Russians could lose control even of East Germany. The Iron Curtain could collapse.

In one sense that would be a wonderful day. The partition of Europe cannot and must not last forever. But with the Iron Curtain would also collapse virtually

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every innovative institution in the Western alliance: NATO, the Common Market, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, even the Federal Republic of Germany. All are based on the cold war division of Europe.

That division was not caused by choice, but by necessity: initially by Hitler's aggression and then by the fact that the Soviet Union carried the brunt of the land war against Nazi Germany. America and Britain desperately needed and encouraged the Russian military advance through Eastern Europe. They did not, of course, want them to stay after the war was over. But they also knew that there was little they could do about it. Moscow was determined to contain the power of Germany and never again to allow Eastern Europe to fall into hostile hands.

AT THE YALTA Conference in February 1945, FDR and Churchill agreed that the new government of Poland should be "friendly" to the Soviet Union, and won Stalin's agreement for "free and unfettered elections" in that country. The two objectives were incompatible. The elections were a mockery. The Russians established control over Poland and a few years later over the other East European countries they occupied. Although their sphere of influence was contested, it was never seriously challenged.

Since 1948, with the Czech coup, Europe has been divided. Each side recognizes the other's sphere of influence; each recognizes that any attempt to change it by force would mean war. Every Administration, Republican or Democratic, has honored that unofficial agreement—not because they wanted to, but because there was no realistic alternative.

Henry Kissinger's deputy, the unfairly abused and misquoted Helmut Sonnenfeldt, pointed out in 1976 that although Eastern Europe is within the "scope and area of natural interest" of the Russians, it has been unable to acquire loyalty in the area other than through force of arms. It should be the objective of the West to transform that "inorganic, unnatural relationship," with its danger to world peace, into an "organic," or nonmilitary one. Our policy, he observed, should be one of "responding to the clearly visible aspirations in Eastern Europe for a more autonomous existence within the context of a strong Soviet geopolitical influence."

That is the heart of the so-called Sonnenfeldt Doctrine. Its observations are unexceptionable and have been operating policy for more than thirty years. They state what everybody knows: that peace in Europe hinges on political stability, and that the interests of both sides can be best served by each respecting the other's sphere of influence in Europe.

Like it or not, the division of Europe is, for the foreseeable future, a fact of life, one that reflects the interests of both superpowers. It cannot be resolved by force. Any dramatic change could wreck both alliance systems. If Poland suddenly pulled itself free from Russian control, the regime in East Germany would be isolated. Bonn, which has ignored the dream of reunification because it seemed so unattainable, might then be tempted to look East. What German political leader could afford to turn his back on the "lost territories" if there seemed a hypothetical chance of regaining them? Bonn's hard-forged links to NATO and the Common Market would be called into question. The ominous specter of a unified Reich would suddenly take form, bringing unknown dangers into European politics. With the German question reopened, all the institutions we have taken for granted would be called into question. NATO would in all likelihood collapse, and with it the major instrument for American control over Western Europe.

Although the division of Europe is an abomination, virtually any conceivable alternative poses enormous risks—not only to the rival alliance systems, but to the political balance that for the first time since 1914 has brought relative tranquility to the continent. This is why the governments of Europe have been restrained in their reaction to the imposition of martial law in Poland. It is also why the Reagan Administration, however much it enjoys Moscow's embarrassment, must recognize that a sudden disruption of the political balance in Europe could be detrimental to both superpowers.

THE PROBLEM TODAY remains the one laid out in the Sonnenfeldt memo: how to nurture greater political freedom in Eastern Europe in a way that will not suddenly disrupt the political balance, not reopen the German question, and not seem an intolerable threat to the Soviet Union. The problem is how to acknowledge Russia's obvious geopolitical influence in the area while working toward a more "organic" relationship that does not rest on fear, force, and intimidation.

The events in Poland have shown that the Soviet empire is not immutable. Change is eternal and unavoidable. But it comes at a price. That price will be paid on both sides of the Iron Curtain and on the institutions that are the products of Europe's partition. There is no indication that Washington, any more than Moscow, is prepared for such changes.

The harsh reality is that the superpowers have a vested interested in the status quo. Each enjoys rumbles of discontent within the other's empire; neither is willing to face the effect that an upheaval on the other side of the Iron Curtain might have on its own alliance system. Solidarity challenged the Soviet empire directly and the European status quo indirectly. The armed force that keeps the Warsaw Pact together is what provides the rationale for NATO. If we are to encourage the demise of the Warsaw Pact, we had better be prepared for profound shocks to our own alliance as well.

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Roosevelt's inspiration to an exhausted Europe.

The Voice Of Hope

By Henry Fairlie

"FAIRLIES DON'T CRY," my mother told me. Even when I was a small boy growing up in London and my father arrived home dead in a taxi, my tears had to be contained until I was among my friends at school. I was therefore all the more surprised when, a few years later, on the morning of April 13, 1945, she came into my bedroom with tears of her own. She had to wake me, a lazy undergraduate on vacation. "Mr. Roosevelt is dead!" she announced, and added, choking, "It's on the wireless!" I can remember no other occasion when I saw my mother weep. I did not again see a Briton cry at the death of an American until November 22, 1963.

FDR's voice was known not only in America but across the world. When my mother said that the news of his death was on the wireless, she was talking of the instrument which had brought him into our home. Franklin D. Roosevelt came, from 3,000 miles away, with Jack Benny. The main image I recall from those years is of the radio set in people's homes. It was not only in occupied Europe that people had to huddle round their sets, lest the gestapo discover them listening to the BBC's broadcasts. My memory is of huddling round the set even in Britain and in peacetime. Radio sets then were not very powerful, and there was always static. Families had to sit near the set, often at a table, with someone always fiddling with the knobs. It was like sitting round a hearth, with someone poking the fire; and to that hearth came the crackling voices of Winston Churchill, of George Burns and Gracie Allen, and of FDR. The fireside chats, we need to remember, were radio talks. It was not FDR who was at his fireside—the mistake Jimmy Carter made on television—it was we who were at our firesides.

From across the Atlantic, Roosevelt came to our firesides, a friend. It is as a friend across the seas that I remember him. Not only during the war, but even, when I was only a boy, before it. The voice itself was friendly, and it seemed always to say friendly things. If he was giving money to the unemployed in America, he would give pocket-money to me in England. Generous-hearted—one could tell that from his voice—and trustworthy. He would not let one down. It is perhaps hard to convey what his voice meant to us in London, second only to Churchill's, as Britain stood alone and the bombs rained down. If Churchill's was the voice of resistance, Roosevelt's was the voice of hope. It was during the darkest days in Britain that Churchill pointed across the Atlantic: "But westward, look, the land is bright."

It would not have seemed so bright if there had not been Roosevelt. We knew his voice, and it was cheerful. Even as a boy, and later as an undergraduate, I thought he seemed different from Woodrow Wilson, the first President really to matter to Europe. Wilson was a little governessy; he was always lecturing. He would say "Tut, tut!" if one skipped one's homework; but Roosevelt—just this once—would understand.

But behind it all was something that really counted. There across the Channel were those lunatic dictators: Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, Stalin. My boyhood was marked by the disappearance, one by one, of every democracy on the continent. "What is the difference between Chamberlain and Hitler?" went one schoolboy joke. "Chamberlain takes his weekends in the country. Hitler takes his countries at the weekends." And against the fearful spectacle of all Europe lying under a great terror, with not a free people left, stood the reassuring spectacle of a free and confident and working democracy—Roosevelt's America. When Churchill spoke of the Anglo-American friendship in that summer of 1940—"Like the Mississippi, it just keeps rolling along. Let it roll. Let it roll on in full flood, inexorable, irresistible, benignant, to broader lands and better days"—we believed him partly because FDR was to us one man who had made it work.

The radio in FDR's day carried farther and more immediately than any means of communication had done before. The Atlantic Charter, which Churchill and Roosevelt signed in 1941, even before America was in the war, was a radio document. With its proclamation of the Four Freedoms to all the peoples of the world, it was endlessly chattered to them over the waves of the BBC's Overseas Service, and it was then written into the original charter of the United Nations.

We are tempted to scrutinize FDR's fireside chats as if they were no more than exercises in public relations. They certainly were that. He was not averse to publicity, not uninterested (he would have appreciated the word) in his "image." But he had an extraordinarily quick and deep sense of the opportunities and significance of the new instrument. Even as Governor of

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New York, if he wished to force the hands of the legislators at Albany, he appealed to the people by radio. He gave his first fireside chat only eight days after assuming the presidency. As early as 1929, he said: "It seems to me that radio is gradually bringing to the ears of the people matters of interest concerning their country which they refused to consider in the daily press with their eyes." We miss the point if we see his use of the radio only as a device for the "selling" of the candidate or the President. He realized that it had changed our notion of "the people," as the popular press had done; that it had expanded the "democracy," made politics more democratic by making the people as a body more accessible; even that it had altered the size of the world—"one world" is a phrase from the radio age.

His immediate understanding and skillful use of the radio were only part of the innovating spirit which was his most striking characteristic as a politician. The man who took to the radio like a duck to water was the same man who, in his first campaign for the New York Senate in 1910, hired an automobile, a two-cylinder red Maxwell, with no windshield or top, to dash through (of all places) Dutchess County; and it was the same man who broke all precedents twenty-two years later when he hired a little plane to take him to Chicago to make his acceptance speech. (It would, after all, be broadcast.) Ignore his willingness to try everything, however new, and one ignores the spark which lit first a nation and then the world, each time bringing hope where there had been none.

DRAWING OF FDR BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The willingness to try everything was how Roosevelt governed. The memoirs of those who served him are as bountiful as the reminiscences about any politician. None are more jolly to read. How he stirred up those around him—pitting them against each other—to stir up any ideas that they might have. How he put off what he was not yet ready to decide—appearing to be maddeningly indifferent—then to make his decision when they were least ready for it. Only FDR could have avoided listening to the chairman of the Federal Reserve, Marriner Eccles, who was seeking what he believed to be an important decision, by addressing himself, throughout most of the meeting, to the mess Fala had made on the carpet. "Do you see what Fala has done?" The presidential eyes deliberately wandered, refusing to focus on Eccles.

It is easy to tell such stories merely for their jollity. But in the method was the genius; in the genius was the policy. Rexford Tugwell could say of the early Brain Trust days: "We could throw out pieces of theory and perhaps they would find a place in his scheme . . . ; and perhaps the inventiveness of the suggestion would attract notice. But the tapestry of policy he was weaving was guided by an artist's conception which was not made known to us." In the end, a Harold Ickes or, more sourly, a Henry Wallace, said the same. In that method lies the answer to those who say that the New Deal did not really change much, that it had no concept, that it was only a series of improvisations which added up to more wind than water. That was not how it seemed to Americans at the time, or how the news of it reached even a schoolboy in Britain. Were we all, then, just taken in?

Whenever one reads the revisionist historians of the recent past, they seem to have forgotten so much of what it was like at the time; or perhaps, many of them being so young, never knew. They are able to write of the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine, for example, as if it is of little account that Europe in that terrible winter of 1947 was a hell frozen over. They forget that Europe had collapsed as an organized industrial and political community, and that this was the reality that faced the Americans who had to decide and act. The trouble with the revisionists is that they seem to have only the documents. They appear to have no memory; not only no memory of their own, but no sense of historical memory. They work busily on the documents, but with no historical imagination. They fail to take into account the voices of the ordinary

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people who lived through that time. I believe it when I read that, after FDR gave his First Inaugural, half a million Americans wrote to the White House.

Of course the New Deal was not revolutionary. Did Roosevelt ever claim that it was? Someone has pointed out that the left-wing revisionists of the New Deal during the 1960s were really only complaining that it was not a socialist program. But then who ever thought it was socialist, except the conservatives who detested it at the time? Or even radical, for that matter? The radicals were persistently critical of what they thought was the inadequate liberalism of the New Deal. It is true that unemployment was *not* significantly reduced until the war; that fundamental power relationships were *not* basically changed; that the New Deal did *not* address itself to the blacks or even really to the very poor. (Basic poverty was not brought onto the unfinished agenda of the nation until the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. It was the concern of the Great Society, not the concern of the New Deal.) All of that, and more, is irrefutable. But what is most significant is that America was made—for the majority of Americans—a far better place in which to live than it had been.

PHOTOGRAPH OF ROOSEVELT CAMPAIGNING BY PHOTOWORLD

It makes not a scrap of sense to say that some sort of New Deal would have had to be introduced by Hoover if he had been reelected. (It is even said that he was already moving in that direction. If one believes that, one will believe anything!) Roosevelt was the New Deal, and Hoover was not Roosevelt. Even if one were to say only that Roosevelt liked politics and enjoyed being President, while Hoover did not much like politics and hated being in the White House, one is saying more than those who pick over only the legislation and executive orders realize. For what was the New Deal but a President jollying and chivvying lots of people to get things done? What was it but a rabbit warren of a hundred agencies and ten thousand people, with a Scottish terrier (a rather large terrier) scuffling at the entrance, barking happily and wagging his tail as he made the rabbits scurry everywhere?

To say that the New Deal wrought no institutional changes is poppycock. For what was the New Deal but the agencies, with their bewildering array of acronyms, which popped up all over the place—not only in Washington—and then grew into a coral reef which no one since has succeeded in breaking down? Everything in the New Deal was introduced as temporary, "for the emergency," but what appeared to be improvisations quickly grew into institutions. The most striking fact about the New Deal is its rapid institutionalization, and no one can read the memoirs without realizing that FDR knew exactly what he was doing. It has often been said that the genius of English politics in its heyday was that the substance of its institutions was changed without having to change their appearance. Similarly, Roosevelt avoided taking on, say, the great departments and their clients by creating new agencies. It took a politician of supreme confidence as well as skill to let loose so many oddballs at so many desks to do so many things, and still manage to weave them into that tapestry.

The institutions of a country are not only those that occupy the great edifices of government in its capital. To bring millions of people into a party who were not in it before, to include those who were excluded, to make the trade unions strong, is to work not merely a political but an institutional change. It is sometimes said that the rapid advances in technology, especially when spurred by the war effort, would have given the Americans prosperity in any case. But who brought so many Americans into the mainstream to enjoy so large a share of that prosperity? It was not the technology, it was a man; it was not the economy, it was government. It was a politician feeling his way with his fingertips to the millions upon millions of immigrants and descendants of immigrants who were at last ready to claim that the promise of America should be translated into performance for them.

Of course he felt his way to them partly to win their

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votes, and formed the famous New Deal coalition partly to give himself a political base. But as Isaiah Berlin once said of Chaim Weizmann: ". . . in his case, as in that of virtually every statesman, personal motives are inextricably mixed with, at the lowest, *conceptions of political expediency and, at the highest,* a pure and disinterested public ideal." It is always absurd to ask that our politicians "do something," and then complain when they get it done by acting as politicians. If we think that the personal ambition or the political expediency in some way lessens the idealism, we had better go back to the beginning, and sift through the murky personal motives and political maneuvers of the noble Pericles. You do not get the right architect to build the Parthenon without first finding the political base to supply the funds. Roosevelt built a political base—and then post offices and park benches.

BUT THE METHOD would not have worked if it had not been held together by character and by vision. The two, in him, are inseparable. He was a large man. Even listening to him on the radio, one felt that he was physically large. (Churchill was quite tiny; yet one thinks of him as large.) There is not an apprentice cartoonist today who could not draw FDR blindfold; and there is no possible cartoon of him in which the jaw, the cigarette holder, the hat, the smile, the sheer zest of him would not spring from the page. "Everything I saw and heard," said Tugwell after his first meeting, "was merged in an impression of vitality." We may be grateful that Doris Kearns did not have the opportunity to go to work on Roosevelt, and scrape around his edges to discover the insecurities in so large a frame. It is in fact remarkable after all these years how little has ever been said of him that is small or distasteful; and those who were small about him in his life, not least those who served and then left him, only made themselves seem small.

There was a popular song at the time, "Franklin D. Roosevelt Jones," which we sang even in England. It was about a boy who was a winner in every way. Roosevelt was a winner; one never doubted it, in peace or war. His zest in the game was partly what carried him through, and in turn enabled him to carry through so much. But in the zest, in the fun, was also the vision. The largeness one felt in him, the generosity of spirit, was also a spaciousness of vision. What remains forever daunting to explain is how an aristocrat from the Hudson Valley—a man who had every reason for thinking that America was the property of the Roosevelts—had so generous a conception of America. There was no one he wished to keep out, not even out of his office, for if he disliked them, he would simply taunt them; and not out of the whole wide-open space and unfinished story of America. He was the first and last politician who translated the spaciousness of America—simply the Idea of it—from the wilderness and the frontier to the cities and their sidewalks.

The openness, the generosity, the inventiveness, the innovation, the experimenting, the embrace: they were the unfailing welcome of one man to a land that had been created to make welcome. He did not wish to *close down America. He did not think that small is* beautiful. He thought that big was beautiful, the bigger the better, for then more people could be accommodated. Dedicated (like a Roosevelt before him) to conservation, he then used conservation to create jobs. How simple the idea: who else dared it? When he was told that artists and writers felt that they also were workers, and should be helped by the WPA, did he hem and haw about the folly of spending money on painting and literature? He just said: "Why not?" He did not bankrupt the budget; he just expanded the country. The Democrats today need to learn most from the spaciousness, and remember that America is big, was made to be big, and waits to be made big again. Big countries are big governments.

People will not understand FDR's war leadership if they fail to realize that to Europeans as well as to Americans he had given this picture of America as still large and spacious and open, vital and confident and young. No other country has ever come forward at a moment of crisis, and largely by his decisions, with such superb supreme commanders and such brilliant field commanders. The command of the American forces during the war—and he was unmistakably the commander-in-chief—saved countless lives in enemy as well as allied countries. The commanders were responsible for their rigorous training, but it was FDR's expansiveness that gave America the heart and muscle to do it. The factories went to work—as early as December 1940 he pledged that the U.S. would be "the great arsenal of democracy"—and then the troops came. Some of their officers were billeted on my college at Oxford, Corpus Christi, while they waited for D-Day. It was the first time that I had actually seen Americans. What strange habits they had! But how young they seemed (even to an undergraduate), how confident and *democratic*! (They called *anyone* by his first name!) Some of them had names that ended in "baum," or "berg," or "owski," or "tino"; and all were Americans, and confidently Americans—Americans who had finally been made Americans by Roosevelt.

I WILL NOT HERE discuss his diplomacy in the war. It was often at fault, but the fault, I believe, more of an American view of the world than simply his own. To the English and to Europeans, as much as to Americans, what he had done earlier in peace was the foundation of his leadership in war. I can never forget the feeling that the navy-blue mantle he wore during the war had been thrown round me as I slept under the kitchen table during the Blitz; round my mother as she slept under the basement stairs; round all the huddled peoples of Europe. He brought into the war an Amer-

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ica which, by policies that earned him the accusation that he was a traitor to his class, he had made strong and well and united. He brought into the war a working democracy—which made the dictatorships seem unfrightening—and one doubts if anyone else could have done it. We really did believe that westward the land was bright; and when the GIs arrived, going to war with cameras and Camels, they confirmed it. Across the Atlantic there really were broader lands and better days—for one man had made them so for millions of Americans. When an American lieutenant who was billeted on my college called me Hank one day, I knew that democracy had come to my country.

Sometime at the end of May 1945, that American lieutenant, who had become a friend, left my college. The convoy of American army trucks roared through the narrow streets of the old city, the American commanders then to lead their men over the whitened bones of their fathers in Europe. A few days later, he was killed. The symbol of my college is a pelican. A few months after the end of the war, two live pelicans arrived for my college. They were sent by some of the American officers we had come to know, in the names of their dead buddies and themselves. It was the most characteristic act of American generosity I had yet encountered, and I could not help feeling that Franklin D. Roosevelt, if he had known, would have sent such a gift, as he had sent Lend-Lease. And there had been the "Bundles for Britain." Why be surprised then, when the Marshall Plan's aid came, a few years later? Who had made America, not only so generous, but so able to be generous? Two live pelicans from Louisiana to a "dead" college in Oxford—that was the inspiration of Roosevelt's America to exhausted Europe.

Who was the man behind the legend?

The Roosevelt We Knew

By Joseph Alsop

FROM AFAR, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was always charming, always impressive, always more than lifesize; but at close hand, he could too easily seem artificially genial, less than forthright, and more than a little superficial. When he died, a nation wept and so did half the world; but in life he was hated with passionate near-unanimity by Americans of his own kind. More important, he was appraised with varying degrees of condescension, often extreme and frequently hostile, by a high percentage of the leading intellects of his time.

Most important of all, even those who were closest to him during his years in the White House, in fact the very men whose names he had made large in the land, often regarded him primarily as an inexhaustible source of energy and power—an invaluable source because the power was so vast, a worrying source because too easily misguided, and thus a source always in need of being guided and manipulated, of being *aimed* like a fire hose, so to say, in order to get done what really needed doing.

Yet these men who so often thought they were using the President, which means most of the first group of New Dealers, many of the second group, and even a good many of those who staffed the war effort, never fully understood their real situations and their relationships to their chief. Consciously or instinctively, Roosevelt was deftly using them while they thought to use him. When they ceased to be useful to him, they were also discarded as casually as morning papers sufficiently skimmed. By the same token, the Cabinet officers and high advisers whom he positively encouraged to fight out their policy difference with bellicose publicity always tended to suppose that the President was a man incapable of choosing between right (their side of the argument) and wrong (the other side). While they openly belabored one another with everything short of baseball bats, these eminent public servants in fact never seemed to suspect what was really happening.

Meanwhile, the President was wickedly amused by the spectacle of his subordinates' squabbles. He was anything but averse to his resulting role of fatherly arbiter. And he benefited greatly (and nothing pleased him more than making an unobserved gain) by the chance to test the trends of public and congressional opinion, and thus to see exactly how far he could comfortably go himself. Nor did he care in the least that this way of carrying on the government appeared shockingly disorderly to solemn editorial writers, to

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Joseph Alsop is a former syndicated columnist for the *Washington Post*. This article is reprinted from *FDR: A Centenary Remembrance*, by Joseph Alsop, © 1982 by Thames & Hudson Ltd, London. Reprinted by arrangement with the Viking Press.

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foreign observers of every kind, and to all sorts of other persons who never learned the two main rules for judging what Franklin Roosevelt was up to—that this President used others but was never used himself, and that he cared greatly about results and rather little about how the results were obtained.

For these and many other reasons, the second Roosevelt was certainly the most enigmatic (or so it seems to me) of all the major Presidents so fortunately produced by the United States. Yet certain aspects of Franklin Roosevelt, both as man and man of action, were the opposite of enigmatic, and may therefore be offered as fixed points, or dependable bearings, for anyone who seeks to assess his leadership. This is worth doing, too, for he will soon belong to history alone. The time is not far off, in fact, when no one will still be here who was old enough at the time to retain a vivid memory of the Roosevelt presidency.

PHOTOGRAPH OF FDR IN BOISE, IDAHO (1937) BY UPI

As a man of action, to begin with, he was singularly long headed, singularly patient, singularly realistic, and singularly bold. How his plans and aims invisibly matured, seemingly like organic growths in the back of his mind, and how his strange sense of timing really worked, are subjects worthy of long, special study. No American leader has ever operated in quite so unexpected a way or possessed a comparable sense of timing. The fixed points here are that he almost never failed to wait until the right moment to do what he wanted to do, and that when the moment came he repeatedly did what others did not dare to do because it seemed too difficult, or too costly, or too defiant of all the old known rules of American political behavior.

As for Roosevelt the man, he was certainly no plaster saint. In certain ways he could obviously be thoughtless, even unfeeling. He and his wife, for instance, married when both were painfully young and inexperienced. She had had a downright ghastly childhood and youth; and he had had an immensely happy childhood and a youth altogether comfortable and if anything overprotected. It was up to him, if it was up to anyone, to help her reach some sort of accommodation with married life and with her peculiar new surroundings.

Instead, if one may judge by the whole volumes to be read between the lines of Mrs. Roosevelt's revealing, deceptively innocent-appearing autobiography, he seems to have been content to live on the surface of their common life, as it were, thereby causing Mrs. Roosevelt to retreat over and over again into what she herself later condemned as "Patient Griseldaism." He expected her, in fact, to be what she was never likely to be, the cheerful, conventional wife of a prosperous young New Yorker belonging to the special group they both came from. He was patient with her. He apparently put up without protest with long fits of silent but ostentatious wifely martyrdom that would have driven most men to the madhouse or the divorce court. Yet was this not, perhaps, because he did not care very much whether his wife felt martyred or not? At any rate, he did nothing to ease her way or to protect her. Above all, he left her wholly unprotected against the relentlessly domineering ways of his possessive mother.

Nowadays such a marriage would be likely to break up within a year or so. Instead, it endured until he died, finally worn out by the constant toil and fearful burdens of his great office, and in the arms of another woman only a few minutes before he drew his last breath. Yet almost no persons who bulked large in his life were so useful to him as Mrs. Roosevelt, nor was she the only human being from whom he took much without much thought about the taking.

None can doubt, however, that Franklin Roosevelt was a truly good man. Here the tests are simple: which sides he chose at every turning in his remarkable career. He was against, indeed he was the unrelenting enemy of, misery, poverty, oppression, cruelty, injustice, meanness, smallness, obscurantism, and every other form of nastiness and source of unhappiness that human beings and their societies are given to; and he was the stout friend of plenty, generosity, decency, liberality, geniality, openness, justice, and freedom. In truth, he loved the light and loathed the darkness, and in hard and testing times, he was also inspired and sustained—a point no longer fashionable to make but a true point nonetheless—by a simple, rather old-fashioned, but deep and unshakable Christian faith. No one not wholly warped by one of the mindless ideologies of left or right can remember the condition of the United States in 1932, or the danger of the world in

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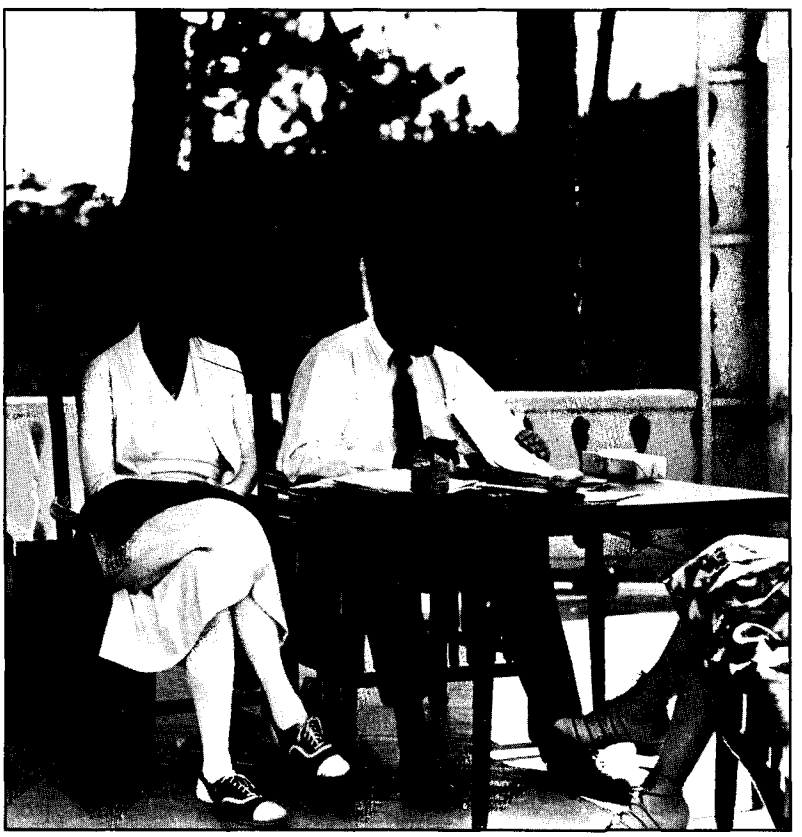
1939, without concluding that Franklin Delano Roosevelt belongs on the very short list of very great Presidents.

What, then, were his most important achievements? In world affairs, his central achievement nowadays seems obvious enough, but it is generally forgotten now that what he achieved seemed utterly impossible at the time. From the foundation of the government under George Washington until close to the end of Franklin Roosevelt's second Administration, the situation of the United Stated was always essentially the one described in Bismarck's envious joke, which I used to hear in the paraphrase of the late Justice Felix Frankfurter. In the Frankfurter version (for which he took entire credit), the joke was: "God Almighty takes care of infants, drunkards, and the United States of America."



PHOTOGRAPH OF ELEANOR AND FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT AT WARM SPRINGS

Almost without exception, Americans used to assume that this wholly exceptional national situation could be taken for granted; and for those who cannot remember it, I must add that the situation was delightful while it lasted. If we had the faintest chance of once again safely retreating into our former status as a strictly peripheral but still great power, living in prosperous continental isolation with virtually no need to worry about the rest of the world, I should instantly vote for that option.

But the point is that when most other Americans unquestioningly believed their unique national situation was not only normal but eternal, and thus required no effort to protect it, President Roosevelt quickly saw that the foundations were being undermined and had to be protected. God Almighty could no longer be safely relied upon to take care of the country Roosevelt led, because of new forces let loose upon the unhappy world in Roosevelt's time. Politically, the new forces were best typified by Adolf Hitler, but there was also the less obvious new force of technological change. This process of change has now gone much further; but even in the 1930s the whole world was already shrinking in a way that spelled ultimate doom for the former American continental isolation because of the many advances in technology of that period. In the circumstances, the essential thing to do was to persuade the nation to shoulder the responsibilities of an active great power directly involved in the changing world's affairs and future. Doing just this was Franklin Roosevelt's magnificent and unforgettable feat in the field of foreign policy.

Compared to the feat itself, this detail or that of wartime policy, even the President's sometimes naive dealings with Joseph Stalin, all sink into total unimportance. For good or ill, the role of the United States in the world today is owed to Roosevelt, or rather to his wisdom and courage in facing up to the wholly novel challenges confronting him, and to the way he contrived to meet those challenges against amazingly heavy odds.

As to his central achievement on the home front, it seems to me still more magnificent, yet even today it is not well understood. This is because I do not believe that the real essence of Roosevelt's achievement on the home front is to be found in the list of new federal agencies he founded, or in the new balance of power between the business community and the government which he sought and obtained, or even in the inauguration of the American version of the welfare state, for which he was responsible. Instead, the essence of his achievement, at least that part of his achievement which gave the whole true grandeur, derived in differing degrees and in hardly perceptible ways from the combined impact of his domestic reforms. On a very wide front and in the truest possible sense, Franklin Delano Roosevelt included the excluded.

This will now seem an unlikely claim to most people at home and abroad, because of the vocal and wholly proper American preoccupation in the last 20 years with the part of the job still remaining to be done—particularly the inclusion of the still partly excluded black Americans. What has been accomplished already has therefore been almost ignored. Yet it was a very great accomplishment, historically unparalleled as far

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as I know in any other nation-state of the modern world; and this huge first part of the job was mainly the work of Roosevelt.

It is not easy to grasp how enormous the contrast is between the United States of today and the United States whose leadership Roosevelt assumed in a time of deep trouble after the 1932 election. The truth is that the America Roosevelt was born into in 1882, and the America I was born into in 1910, and even the America of 1932, was an entirely White Anglo-Saxon Protestant nation by any practical test.

THIS DOES NOT mean the nation did not contain a huge minority recruited from other stocks and strains. The largest part of the minority was Catholic, being composed of the Irish, the Italians, the French Canadians, the Poles, and all the other groups the politicians now call "the ethnics." Next came the millions of blacks in the South, then the Jewish Americans, the Spanish speakers (then mostly in the Southwest), and finally all sorts of groups of more exotic origins, including the small groups of Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans, who suffered far harsher exclusion than the black Americans at that time. Yet the presence within the borders, among the work force, and even on the citizenship-rolls of so many people of other origins did not in any real way alter the fact that America in 1932 was still a WASP country in all significant respects.

There were a great many poor White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, of course, but it was still true—even obtrusively true—that WASPs owned while almost everyone else rented; WASPs hired while others took jobs; and WASPs made loans while others borrowed. Even at Harvard College, a *numerus clausus* of 10 percent was still imposed on Jewish applicants for admission. For that matter, as late as 1955 John F. Kennedy was rejected the first time he was nominated for the Board of Overseers, because the majority of the voting alumni of Harvard were not ready to see as Overseer this Irish Catholic who became an Overseer only two years later and would be elected President of the United States only five years later. In almost all the major universities, too, only the utmost proven eminence in a scholar's chosen discipline could overcome a lack of WASP coloration when major appointments were under consideration. And in the management of the economy, a fairly typical episode was the election of Richard Whitney as president of the New York Stock Exchange, one of the most conspicuous posts in the business world of those days. Everyone knew that Whitney was chosen to keep the outsiders out—the outsiders in this case being the up-and-coming Jews in the New York financial community—yet no audible murmurs were heard against the choice of Whitney, a man who later went to prison.

It is hard to credit, and few remember, that these conditions and restrictions still continued in full force when Roosevelt was inaugurated at the climax of the Great Depression, with close to a third of the work force unemployed and the banks shut and seemingly bankrupt. It is not easy, either, to pinpoint precisely how everything was transformed during Franklin Roosevelt's terms in office. Yet there can be no doubt that he wrought the transformation by direct and indirect means; and there can be no doubt, either, that he was furiously blamed for it. This was the real reason rich Americans "went to hiss Roosevelt" at newsreel theaters, because they truly hated him. This is why he was called "a traitor to his class." The vast majority of the really rich Americans in those days belonged, in one way or another, to one of the regional WASP in-groups; in varying degrees the positions of many depended on continuing the old WASP exclusive dominance; and Roosevelt's threat to this dominance, rather than this Rooseveltian measure or that, was what produced the Roosevelt-haters.

In honesty, it should be said that there have been later minuses among pluses, in the usual way. Like a lizard dropping its tail, the United States has now lost both its former history and its old culture because both were too purely WASP. One may be sure that Roosevelt himself would have deplored both losses, not least because no coherent new American culture and no coherent new view of the American historical identity have as yet replaced what was lost. By the same token, one cannot avoid the suspicion that if Roosevelt had lived on to see the new America he so largely made, he would have felt twinges of nostalgia for the second J. P. Morgan whenever he inspected the new breed of American billionaires.

YET ONLY consider. At the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's inauguration close to 50 percent of all Americans were in some degree excluded from the full rights enjoyed by all WASP Americans (except for those few living in ancient, isolated pockets of primitivism and poverty, like the Appalachian mountain people). More particularly, non-WASP Americans, however able, were excluded from the normal opportunities of any moderately fortunate WASP. In some cases, the exclusion was downright shocking, as with the blacks and the Americans of Asian origin. But in all cases the exclusion was there, whether in greater or lesser measure, and it was felt and bitterly resented. To Roosevelt, therefore, about 40 percent of all Americans now owe the fact that they have become undoubted "citizens with a full share" (to borrow a phrase from General de Gaulle). This gigantic achievement further prepared the way for the long effort, still happily in progress, to give a full share to those who nonetheless remain partly excluded. "He gave tens of millions their full and rightful share at last" seems to me an honorable epitaph, and although Franklin Delano Roosevelt did not finish the job, it is a true epitaph for him.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Second Looks

"Why was I born with such contemporaries?" sighed Bernard Shaw at one sorely beset moment. If a comparative mite can presume to commiserate, I understand how he felt; but I wonder why he thought he would have been better

Opera Prima
(New Yorker)

off in any other period. The trees change in the surrounding forest of stereotypes; the forest remains. In his day Shaw contended mostly with yea-sayers, knee-jerk affirmers of the status quo. In our day—for quite a number of our days—we've had a forest of knee-jerk nay-sayers. Lately they are being joined by, or are metamorphosing into, the New Slick.

The New Slick can't be fooled. The magazines published specifically for them assure them of it. They can read signs, are wised up, are proof against hype. What they don't know is that their state of mind is the result of an ultra-clever "inside" hype: they have been hyped into thinking that everything is hype. Their knowingness is impervious to the event: it's a form of defense against the event, against the possible testing of their sensibilities and perceptions.

I thought about the New Slick when I saw *Chariots of Fire* again a few days ago. They had all sniffed it out as a "Masterpiece Theater" film even before they had seen it; and those who bothered to see it had their smartness confirmed. After all, it is British, a period piece, relies on social distinctions and socially colored motives, and contains nothing remotely heterodox socially, politically, or aesthetically. Since these points are also true of most "Masterpiece Theater" series on PBS, the New Slick felt it could afford to smirk.

But that smart-cat smirk extended to, protected them from, the theme of the film, which is belief: religious conviction, social/national conviction, ethical conviction, convictions about excellence. The New Slick knew, in advance and in proof, that any film which takes such propositions seriously must be "inspirational" in the cheapest platform-pulpit way.

Pathetic, it seems to me. Because self-aggrandizedly self-anesthetized. A second viewing of *Chariots* underscored for me that the quality of the writing and the acting made the characters' convictions genuine—susceptible of my complete empathy even when I couldn't share them. It's far from a flawless film; a second viewing made *that* clearer, too. Some of the slow-motion passages seem intrusive prettiness; some of the structure is slightly muzzy. (Example: the memorial service that frames the film is—apparently—for Abrahams, but it's in an Anglican church. Why?) Still the several story strands are held in good balance; the film tightens as it goes, through the suspense of its characters rather than through whooped-up editing; and the beliefs they live by are credible and moving. They're additionally moving because we see this film some 60 years after its date. We see those beliefs through the perspective of subsequent grimness, though the beliefs were believed and are still believed. That's why the film evokes irony, not cynicism.

But the mere surface is enough to deflect the New Slick.

One (really) final word about the title. I said in my review that the film made no reference to the Blake poem from which the title is drawn. Numerous readers wrote (still write) to state that Parry's setting of that poem is sung at the end, and I subsequently noted this correction. Now, having seen the picture again, I revert to my first opinion—except for Britishers. Only those who recognize the music from having sung it in school—or who recognize the title beforehand for the same reason—would get the reference. This means mainly Britishers. For anyone else, the film still makes no reference to Blake because, though the hymn is sung at the end, *not one word* of it is comprehensible.

Another set of stereotypes—thinning out after 20 years, I'm glad to say—was foisted on us by auteurist film criticism, which flourished in this country with the rise of the French New Wave around 1960. A chief tenet of auteurism was the quasi Calvinist belief in the "election" of the saved by auteurist critics: the "elect" directors would always do work of at least some merit, and nothing of real merit could ever come from the damned who had been cast aside. Among the latter was Julien Duvivier. In 1964, when I was in Paris as part of a long European-film exploration, I asked the French Film Office to fix a meeting for me with Duvivier, who was then living there. Eyes glazed by current chic, they couldn't understand why I wanted to see this "grandpa" of French cinema. I insisted; they complied.

When we met, I told Duvivier that I had come to pay a debt. His film *Poil de Carotte* (his second, sound version made in 1932) was not literally the first foreign film I had seen, but it had opened up dimensions different from the American films I loved and still love. I had wanted the chance to thank him. Later

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Chariots of Fire. Well written, well directed, exquisitely acted social drama based on true story of two British Olympic runners, 1924.

My Dinner With André. Seemingly impromptu table-talk of Wallace Shawn, the playwright, and André Gregory, the director, becomes an interesting inquiry into contemporary chances for fulfillment.

Reds. The story of John Reed and Louise Bryant. So stirring, so committed, that its patent flaws are forgivable. Diane Keaton surpasses expectation; Beatty, co-star, co-author, director, and producer, deserves cheers.

Time Bandits. Product of two Monty Python people, a romp through time and space with a child and six dwarfs. Children adore it; so do I and some other adults.

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in our talk, I mentioned that his film *La Fin du Jour*, which I had not seen since its first New York engagement in 1939, lived on in my mind as a beauty. He melted. He crossed his luxurious living room, opened a cabinet, and pointed to a few cans of film. He said that he had made some 60 films—he was then 67, he died three years later—and *La Fin du Jour* was the only one of which he kept a print in his home.

Thanks to the retrospective of French film arranged by the Museum of Modern Art, which I've mentioned here, I've now had a chance to see the film again. (Part One of that retrospective, including *La Fin du Jour*, is now touring some cities.) I went to it with the customary nervousness of a belated revisit, and very soon knew that what I had remembered was, is, a masterpiece. It takes place in a home for old actors, but the sentiment you might expect is kept very much in the background, which is a subtler touch than eliminating it completely, while the foreground is held by two bitter stories centering on two great actors, Louis Jouvet and Victor Francen, strongly aided by the flavorsome Michel Simon.

I can't recall ever having seen *La Fin du Jour* scheduled at a revival house in New York, and there is no 16 mm print listed in any rental catalog that I know. I hope that the MOMA show helps to shake some of the two-decade stereotypes about French film. I saw again another Duvivier film, *La Belle Equipe* (1936), in the series and thought it poor; but that hardly seems to support New Wave theories of predestination. Isn't it time to reexamine *La Fin du Jour* and a lot of other dispraised and praised films on their merits?

Speaking of the New Wave: a time-lagged bit of its influence has just arrived from Spain. *Opera Prima*, despite its name, is the sixth film by Fernando Trueba, born 1955, who is also the film critic of both a Madrid newspaper and a weekly. His new picture, which is his first to be seen here, has nothing strenuously wrong with it except that it's been seen dozens of times before—in effect—from many countries, mostly France, mostly in the 1960s, as direct or indirect fruit of the New Wave.

The time is 1978. A young Madrid journalist, played by Oscar Ladoire who is a kind of shuffling cross between Jean-Pierre Léaud and Jean-Pierre Cassel, is separated from his wife and child. He accidentally meets a cousin, a girl whom he hasn't seen since she was 15 when he was her first lover. She is now studying violin, living alone. Soon they resume their affair, and soon there are troubles, caused by the freedom of her spirit and the troublings of his.

The casualness of the narrative, the youthful bohemian atmosphere, the hero's calculatedly womanizing friend, even some of the specific details (there's an interview with a successful foreign novelist, as in *Breathless*), all bespeak the delayed-fuse explosion of New Wave lyrical moodiness in Trueba. The one signal exception is the casting of Paula Molina as the violinist, a somewhat more chunky and housewifely type than New Wave heroines usually are. (Though she has charm.) The film is smoothly made and full of good feeling, but is absolutely superfluous. If Trueba can grow, he has the means to use his growth.

But *Opera Prima* has one secondary utility. The hero keeps complaining about the deterioration of Madrid, about the sensation of violence in the streets, of undirected anger—not like the 1960s, he keeps saying, though both he and Trueba are too young to have been active then. It's cold comfort—frigid, rather—to see that homogeneous old Madrid is having some of the same problems as our heterogeneous new cities.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Arguing With a Tank

Trying to criticize *Dreamgirls*, the new Michael Bennett musical at the Imperial, is like arguing with a tank. The damn thing just rolls over your body, leaving you flat as a pancake with caterpillar tread marks on your brain. I saw it in Boston, where it received much the same reaction from the audience it is getting in New York—people rising to their feet, their brows feverish, their hands raw from applause, to stomp, stampede, and scream with the moist fervor of true believers. Europeans act like this at mass political rallies; we usually reserve such behavior for sports events. It reminded me of a time, many years ago in Ebbets Field, when the old Brooklyn Dodgers won their first National League pennant in decades. There was primal energy rushing up from under the seats, and God help you if you happened to be a fan of the New York Giants.

Dreamgirls
by Michael Bennett

I'm not a fan of *Dreamgirls*, but having been run over by it, I consider my opinion a lot less interesting than the audience reaction. One reason I can offer for the mass hysteria is the relentless Motown music, a mixture of rock, disco, and soul, consciously engineered to turn respectable theatergoers into frenzied Jacobins. Every time the overamplified brass and percussion start thumping away, and the singers screech out those hyena sounds from their upper registers, you can hear responsive growls forming in the throats of the audience. The people who put this musical together could change the social system if they wanted to, because they really know how to use rhythm, sound, light, and sensory effects in order to get us rattling our cages.

I am told that some musicians consider Henry Krieger's rhythm-and-blues score one of the best ever composed for the musical theater. To my bruised ears, it sounded extremely monotonous, each new number indistinguishable—in pitch, tone and rhythm—from the last, though I suspect the uniformity and tunelessness are responsible for the Pavlovian effect. As for Tom Eyen's lyrics, here is a sample quatrain:

> You are horribly satanic
> The way you lead me around.
> I feel just like the Titanic
> I always run aground.

Socko, huh? (I feel just a little satanic mentioning that the Titanic ran into an iceberg.)

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Mr. Eyen's book is as witless as his lyrics when examined away from the evening's pulsations. The musical concerns a trio of backup singers, reputedly based on the Supremes, who, after an inauspicious tryout at a talent show in the Apollo theater, acquire a ruthless manager and rise to the top of the charts. This is done at the sacrifice of some honor, since these black singers have to accept white compromises in order to get ahead; they also sacrifice their original leader, Effie, an ample creature considered too hefty for the media, who is therefore replaced—not without a lot of showstopping musical agony—by a more slender singer. The Dreamettes (not to be confused with the Harlettes) are soon called the Dreams, a sign of growing maturity. They perform in Miami, though they are not allowed to stay in the same hotel, then on the ABC Star Cavalcade, then in Vegas, gaining in fame what they lose in "Negritude." At the end of the show, in their final performance before their breakup, they score a triumph at the legendary Met, apparently turning into legends themselves, since they have been costumed like Egyptian princesses preparing for entombment.

The plot has a few more complications —not to mention occasional philosophical ruminations on the comparative merits of "pop versus soul"—but the directorial emphasis is on sights and sounds, on flourescent signs, white hand-held mikes, and magnificently gussied-up gowns. You find yourself following the story less than the quick changes, and leave the theater humming the wigs and costumes rather than the songs. Tharon Musser's lighting is literally dazzling, since the multi-colored leikos bounce off the singers' metallic dresses right into your eyes, and Robin Wagner's set—a flexible construction that doubles as a lighting grid—though the most imaginative thing in the show, is designed to keep the environment changing lest you pause for a moment to peek under the flash.

It would be silly to examine the values of such an event, except they are so equivocal they are almost intriguing. We learn that fame demands a high moral price but also that it is very rewarding. We learn about the symbolic significance of the Cadillac car in the cultural life of America ("Got me a Cadillac, Cadillac, Cadillac car" is the memorable number that hits the pop charts) since it is bought by the "Negro brother to prove he too belongs to the human dream." And we learn from Effie's eventual success as a soloist (also from her torch song, "I'm Changing") that you can conquer even a hard drug habit if you have sufficient determination and volume.

What I learned, in addition, is that despite the occasional nod toward social matters, Broadway is still primarily interested in black people if they can display a nice sense of rhythm, along with a little singing and dancing. These capacities the young cast has in abundance, especially Jennifer Holliday, as Effie, who is already on her way to becoming one of the great loud-mouth belters of the musical theater, in the tradition of Merman and Streisand. Like the rest of the cast, she's not much of an actress, but the art of acting is of no great moment to a musical which makes demands not on your mind or emotions but almost exclusively on your nervous system.

COMING:

Ann Douglas on Perry Miller,

a great teacher.

TWO RECENT fictional theatrical biographies—Thomas Kempinski's *Duet For One*, about the physical and psychological hardships of the stricken cellist, Jacqueline du Pré; and Howard Barker's *No End of Blame*, about the exiled Hungarian cartoonist, Vicky—do make their appeal to other anatomical areas than the ganglia, but rather than descant on why they fail (they are both overwritten, and the central role of the Barker production is overacted), I would rather tell you about two successful acts of theatrical intelligence, neither of them plays. The first is Konstantin Rudnitsky's *Meyerhold the Director* (Ardis, $75) a massive volume first published over a decade ago, and now translated into English by George Petrov. The book is a satisfying study of Meyerhold's theatrical development, though less satisfying as a study of his life, and will do much to consolidate his place as the chief exponent of the modern anti-realistic theater. Beginning as an actor with the Moscow Art Theater, Meyerhold stood in much the same relationship to Stanislavsky as Jung did to Freud, which is to say, he was a faithful disciple who soon turned renegade and developed his own system. Unlike Jung, Meyerhold never actually lost the affection of his mentor; it was Stanislavsky's partner who provided the basis for a mutual animosity. Nemirovich-Danchenko had little respect for the nervous, agitated young actor who had played Treplev in the Art Theater's production of Chekhov's *The Sea Gull* and Tusenbach in *Three Sisters*, so Meyerhold went to the provinces to serve as director to his own newly formed company.

There he continued to do Chekhov's plays, but in a different way. He was beginning to experiment with Symbolist techniques, born, as he was later to say, out of "longing for an art of large generalizations." Soon, Meyerhold was to deliver a decisive attack on the Art Theater for its lack of poetry, mystery, and spirituality, for having lost its avant-garde direction. Stanislavsky was not unmoved by Meyerhold's criticism; soon this arch-realist was writing

> that realism, the depiction of everyday life, has outlived its time. The time has come for the unreal on the stage. . . . One must show life not as it flows by in reality, but as we dimly perceive it in our dreams, visions, moments of elevated feeling.

Perhaps unconsciously, Stanislavsky was paraphrasing Treplev's remarks in *The Sea Gull* ("One must depict life not as it is, and not as it ought to be, but as we see it in our dreams"), but whereas Chekhov originally intended this to be the aesthetic of an ineffectual dreamer, it was now becoming, under the influence of Meyerhold, the basis for a powerful theatrical alternative.

Meyerhold practiced this alternative for the next 35 years, in such landmark productions as Crommelynck's *Magnificent Cuckold*, Gogol's *Inspector General*, and Mayakovsky's *The Bedbug*. Simultaneously with Stanislavsky, he tried to stage Erdman's anti-Stalinist satirical comedy, *The Suicide*. Both productions were abruptly suppressed by order of Stalin.

IT WAS NOT long before Meyerhold himself was suppressed by Stalin. His "formalist" techniques were now anathema to a regime which favored the picture-poster propaganda called Soviet Realism, and following a series of vitriolic articles in the central newspapers, the Meyerhold State Theater was liquidated. Meyerhold's wife

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was murdered in a particularly brutal manner, with 11 knife wounds in her body, her throat cut, her eyes gouged out. And Meyerhold himself, having been sentenced to ten years of solitary confinement, died the day after sentencing, probably murdered—one of hundreds of artists sacrificed to a death-loving political system.

JOAN BARISH'S *The Anti-Theatrical Prejudice* (University of California Press, $24.50) explains, among its other valuable functions, why theater has traditionally been a threatening source of disquiet to those concerned with social and political behavior. With impeccable scholarship and learning, Professor Barish traces the ancient distrust of plays and players from its early appearance in Plato, whose prejudice was based on dislike for the very act of imitation, through the biblical injunction against transvestism ("The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment") which formed the foundation for Puritan attacks on the Elizabethan stage, through Hobbes, Rousseau, and Nietzsche, until it enters the theater itself, in the purifying fires of Artaud, Grotowski, and Handke.

Barish offers many reasons for this deep-seated prejudice, the most persistent being a Western hatred of feigning, of appearing to be somebody else. The very terms borrowed from the theater—stagey, melodramatic, making a scene, putting on an act—"tend to be hostile or belittling." Lionel Trilling noticed a similar thing in *Sincerity and Authenticity* while examining the Romantic demand for an authentic self, free from appearances or artificiality, absolutely natural. The odd thing is that many playwrights have made similar demands on human and theatrical behavior (Hamlet says, "I know not seems"). In fact, it may be that realism has survived in the theater, long after its possibilities as a form have been exhausted, because it satisfies the abiding Puritan impulse to

> detheatricalize the theater, to strip it of just those attributes which . . . made it theater in the first place—not only its gaudiness and bustle, but also its licentious ways with time and space, and its casual recourse to the astounding and the marvelous.

A most valuable book providing important insights into the way we think about the stage.

Evelyn Waugh's novel of sex and religion.

BRIDESHEAD RE-REVISITED

BY BRAD LEITHAUSER

The recent emergence of *Brideshead Revisited* as a 13-part TV serial, freshly imported from the BBC, crowns at long last the efforts to film Evelyn Waugh's most popular novel. Screen rights were first sold to MGM on "princely terms" in 1946, shortly after the book's surpassingly successful appearance in America. Waugh abruptly found himself in "an unfamiliar world of fan mail and press photographers," according to his later introduction to the novel; the film's potential audience seemed enormous. Yet the film project was abandoned. In 1950 a new proposal arose, with new financial backing and the hope that Graham Greene might serve as scriptwriter. This prospect elated Waugh, who wrote to Greene,

> I am sure you can make a fine film of it. Don't think I shall be cantankerous. I am cantankerous but not about that sort of thing—about cooking and theology and clothes and grammar and dogs.

Yet this proposal, too, dissolved. There is nothing unusual in the cancellation of plans to film a novel, even one for whose rights colossal sums have been tendered, but in the case of *Brideshead Revisited* (Little Brown, $4.95 paper) there exist special difficulties which, especially in the 1940s and 1950s, may have made an adaptation intractable. Perhaps the times are more favorable now.

One such difficulty is the book's skew sexuality. Waugh's letters while he was composing the novel describe it as "painfully erotic" and "rather smutty." Apparently the MGM project languished in part because of fear that the book's multiple adulteries would offend the powerful Catholic Legion of Decency. The book's prevalent homosexuality would surely have had to be concealed altogether. Artistically, such concealment poses no easy task, for the very essence of the book's most fascinating character, Anthony Blanche, is the gleeful flagrance with which he pursues his shocking life. Anyone undertaking to film *Brideshead* must assimilate Blanche, a figure at once large, scandalous, risible, and keenly discerning. His presence colors, complementarily darkens, the "pure" friendship that forms the book's chief relationship—that between the narrator Charles Ryder and Sebastian Flyte, who as an Oxford undergraduate "was the most conspicuous man of his year by reason of his beauty, which was arresting, and his eccentricities of behavior."

The book's weighty Catholicism presents the aspiring filmmaker with a second monumental difficulty. In his earlier books Waugh recommended the appeals of Catholicism unobtrusively, and in the later ones with a quietly assured superiority. *Brideshead* is one novel in which Waugh, who with his satirist's instinct usually proceeded obliquely and lightly in handling grave matters, preaches. The book's progress coincides with that of the agnostic narrator Charles Ryder as, disputing and ruminating each step of the way, he eventually adopts Catholicism. Whether *Brideshead*'s earnest evangelism is suitable in a contemporary novel remains problematic—but certainly it would prove artistically as well as commercially impracticable in a corporate venture like a movie.

Religion and sex in *Brideshead*—how to portray these two themes on film? They are the filmmaker's two greatest challenges, and on them also, not surprisingly, most literary criticism of *Brideshead* centers. An appreciation of their role, and of the way Waugh ultimately links them, is essential to an understanding of the novel—or a judgment on how ably the book has been translated to the screen.

Brideshead Revisited deals with the spell of enchantment which an aristocratic Anglo-Catholic family, the Flytes, has woven over Charles Ryder. In 1943 Ryder, now an English army officer, finds himself by coincidence bivouacked at Brideshead, the Flyte family estate,

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Brad Leithauser's first book of poems, *Hundreds of Fireflies*, will be published next month by Knopf.

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which he hasn't visited for years. This coincidence impels Ryder's skein of reminiscence on the Flyte family, the enchantment which began with his infatuation with the younger son, Sebastian, at Oxford in the early 1920s; shifted a decade later to his love affair with Sebastian's look-alike younger sister Julia; and culminated in his conversion to their religion.

Any advocate for the novel—and I call it Waugh's finest book—certainly receives no assistance from the author himself. In a 1950 letter to Graham Greene, Waugh appended this note: "Talking of re-reading, I re-read *Brideshead* and was appalled." Later, in his 1959 introduction to the slightly revised version, Waugh speaks of its "gluttony" and "glaring defects." Still later, and most devastatingly, he ridiculed the book in the final volume of his *Sword of Honour* war trilogy.

Yet the reader should be warned that Waugh spoke denigratingly of most of his books. In a cordial letter to Cyril Connolly, who had just reviewed the first volume of Waugh's war trilogy, he wrote: "you have clearly defined all that I dislike in the book"; and of the second volume he wrote to Nancy Mitford, "I am surprised and delighted that you managed to get through [it]." For all his formidable scorn and dudgeon, Waugh was generally not an arrogant man.

THE READER should also be advised that Waugh did not always disparage *Brideshead*. The publication in recent years of his letters and diaries reveals that Waugh actually felt greater enthusiasm for it than for any of his other books. In letters he called it "a masterpiece," "a great English classic," "a very beautiful book," "my magnum opus" (often abbreviated "mag. op."), and most significantly, because intended altogether seriously, "this book which I regard as my first important one." In a letter to Nancy Mitford shortly after publication he requested, "Do please keep your ear to the ground. . . . For the first time since 1928, I am eager about a book." Even in 1946, after a number of critics including Edmund Wilson had slammed it (criticisms from which *Brideshead* has never fully recuperated: its champions still find themselves in the role of defenders or apologists), Waugh wrote in an article for *Life* that it was his "best book."

The novel was composed under more trying circumstances than any of his others. In 1944 Waugh, whose previous military career had consisted mostly of disappointed shufflings, requested a three-month leave to write *Brideshead*, saying: "It is a peculiarity of the literary profession that, once an idea becomes fully formed in the author's mind, it cannot be left unexploited without deterioration." The leave was seemingly granted; subsequently denied; granted and denied and granted again. Waugh had plenty of justification for scuttling or delaying the project, but through all of this uncertainty, and all the surrounding misery of wartime England, he worked assiduously. He wrote with a greater artistic drive, "a zest that was quite strange to me," than he'd ever known or would know again: it was the book in which he put the most of himself.

AS SUCH, it's hardly surprising that the book suffered from what critics have termed "excesses," for Waugh was an excessive man. He was melancholy, cruel, capriciously sentimental, hectoring in his proselytizing, insular, and snobbish, and *Brideshead* is all of these. He was as well, which *Brideshead* amply illustrates, a brilliant comic, a craftsman in love with artful symmetries and fortuities, and a master of spare concision and sparer elision. He also possessed—and nowhere better displayed than in *Brideshead*—a genius for quick portraiture; with his zigzagging caricaturist's pen he could instantly kindle not only humorous and exaggerated figures, but dignified and comely and affecting ones. Consider for example the scene where an "amiable Etonian" who never reappears in the novel apologizes for his friend Sebastian's vomiting in Charles Ryder's room; in a few lines the youth's grace, his faint pomposity, and drunkenly stubborn reliance on a quirky logic are all transmitted:

> He, too, was tipsy and his explanations were repetitive and, towards the end, tearful. 'The wines were too various,' he said: 'it was neither the quality nor the quantity that was at fault. It was the mixture. Grasp that and you have the root of the matter. To understand all is to forgive all.'

Or consider clumsy Father Mackay, whose small talk is so alarmingly literal-minded, as he approaches Charles Ryder, now become an architectural painter:

> he was a stocky, middle-aged, genial Glasgow—Irishman who, when we met, was apt to ask me such questions as, 'Would you say now, Mr. Ryder, that the painter Titian was more truly artistic than the painter Raphael?' and, more disconcertingly still, to remember my answers: 'To revert, Mr. Ryder, to what you said when last I had the pleasure to meet you, would it be right now to say that the painter Titian. . . .'

The book's peripheries abound in such vivid characters.

The figure of Father Mackay also offers a good vantage for examining what I've classified as one of the filmmaker's two gravest difficulties—the book's religiosity. Had Father Mackay appeared in one of Waugh's earlier, more satirical novels, he would probably have remained what he first seems—a well-intentioned bumbler—but in *Brideshead* he becomes far more: he is God's agent. In the book's climactic scene, when Sebastian's reprobate father on his deathbed miraculously reembraces Catholicism, it is Father Mackay who deftly leads him toward grace. Ryder, who has observed these last sacraments, notes afterward how Father Mackay again "became the simple, genial man I had known before." But Ryder has been caught with "an unseen hook and an invisible line" and his conversion is assured, for he has beheld Father Mackay and his dying penitent illuminated by the mercy of God.

This skillful union of the timeless and the temporal, the holy and the humdrum, helps render palatable Waugh's evangelism. Father Mackay may serve as God's instrument, but he remains something of a fool. Sebastian's nanny is an exemplar of virtuous piety, but simultaneously is shown to be a humorously benighted old woman in the way she greets Sebastian, home at last after months of drunkenness and dissolution in the Mideast:

> 'Well,' she said, 'you *are* looking peaky. I expect it's all that foreign food doesn't agree with you. You must fatten up now you're back. Looks as though you'd been having some late nights, too, by the look of your eyes—dancing, I suppose.' (It was ever Nanny Hawkins's belief that the upper classes spent most of their leisure evenings in the ballroom.)

Waugh also lightens his evangelism by making most of the book's Catholics

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unhappy and unlikable. After his conversion Ryder describes himself as "homeless, childless, middle-aged, loveless." Religion brings little joy, only solace. In his agnostic Oxford days Ryder had been far happier: "Later, too, I have come to accept claims which then, in 1923, I never troubled to examine, and to accept the supernatural as the real. I was aware of no such needs that summer at Brideshead."

Yet Waugh's skill at rendering evangelism tolerable on the page should not be allowed to obscure his alien views on the relationship between religion and art. As a temperamental and religious conservative, Waugh felt himself combatively at odds with the current of most modern art and literature. As he said in his *Life* article:

> The failure of modern novelists since and including James Joyce is one of presumption and exorbitance. They are not content with the artificial figures which hitherto passed so gracefully as men and women. They try to represent the whole human mind and soul and yet omit its determining character—that of being God's creatures with a defined purpose.

Sometimes Waugh's conservatism led to an unfortunate restrictiveness, as in his cramped view of language (all the more unfortunate in this case since he seems to have arrogated through sheer truculence, rather than earned, his reputation as a grammatical purist: he is guilty of a number of small delicts). But it seems just as often to have led him, as here in his views on religion and art, into a long-sighted clarity. After *Brideshead* was published, he wrote to his mother:

> The general criticism is that it [*Brideshead*] is religious propaganda. That shows how opinion has changed in 80 years. No one now thinks a book which totally excludes religion is atheist propaganda. 80 years ago every novel included religion as part of the normal life of the people.

Waugh's turning of the coin is instructive: religious intolerance (of which Waugh is so rightly accused) also exists wherever the presence of an artist who is a religious zealot discomfits us.

One's response to *Brideshead*, even more than to most books by devoutly religious authors, seems to depend on one's religious convictions. Devout Catholics often tend to think the book—as Waugh eventually did—needlessly aggressive in its proselytizing, while a strict atheist can hardly help finding the *deus ex machina* of deathbed redemption somewhat embarrassing. I suspect it is the agnostic who will be most receptive to *Brideshead*—to treat its probings and didacticisms as welcome trials, and to feel heartened by agnostic Ryder's passage toward faith. Whatever one's religious beliefs, the book provides a test of whether a 20th-century reader will consent to having God play an active role in a novel's unfolding action.

The book also tests how the reader will respond to a "rather smutty" and "painfully erotic" sexuality. While religion in fiction may or may not make us more uncomfortable now than when *Brideshead* was published, sex in fiction is something we've become increasingly at ease with. This liberalization makes it more likely that the reader will be able to accept the book's variant sexuality—and yet not accord it too much weight. For in this book laced with adultery, prostitution, homosexual love affairs, and loveless marriages, the happiest and most memorable relationship remains the purely platonic one between Charles and Sebastian during their undergraduate days when Oxford "was still a city of aquatint." Waugh derives from the beauty of their friendship most of the book's accumulating pathos, as Sebastian declines into alcoholism and Charles Ryder into stultified melancholy.

DRAWING OF EVELYN WAUGH BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

With this friendship Waugh is dipping into one of the richest traditional themes in English literature—the poignance of wasted male beauty—which, curiously, thrives in poetry but is little found in fiction. It's a theme which runs through the Shakespeare sonnets, especially the first 17, through much verse and much of the appeal of those early-dying Romantics, through Tennyson, Housman, Wilfred Owen, and so many of the poets who struggled with its horrifying apotheosis—the stacked dead of World War I. Waugh's is the most lyrical and memorable treatment in English fiction (far outshining a fine American counterpart, *A Separate Peace*). Sebastian, who begins the book graced with "that epicene beauty which in extreme youth sings aloud for love," finishes a prematurely aged semi-convalescent in a Carthage monastery.

His physical decline is carefully but quickly delineated in three scattered passages. The first of these, after those months of hard drinking in the Mideast, eyes him closely:

> five months had wrought the change of years in him. He was paler, thinner, pouchy under the eyes, drooping in the corners of his mouth, and he

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> showed the scars of a boil on the side of his chin; . . . worst of all, there was a wariness in his eye which I had surprised there at Easter, and which now seemed habitual to him.

The second, as he lies in an African hospital with the grippe, records the decline in a single distant sentence: "He was more than ever emaciated; drink, which made others fat and red, seemed to wither Sebastian." And the last and most painful is offered at one remove, through a description by his sister: "He looked terrible, any age, rather bald with a straggling beard, but he had his old sweet manner." The flower of English youth is blasted; one is left, in Shakespeare's phrase, with "Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness everywhere."

In this wasted world, Charles Ryder instructs us, a man's love for individuals must yield to love of the divine. This lesson unlocks the meaning of a somewhat cryptic passage toward the book's end, when Charles muses on the way Sebastian served as forerunner of his love for Julia, and Julia may portend still another, deeper love:

> perhaps you and I are types and this sadness which sometimes falls between us springs from disappointment in our search, each straining through and beyond the other, snatching a glimpse now and then of the shadow which turns the corner always a pace or two ahead of us.

The "shadow" is all that which is divine. And so, ultimately, sex and religion prove to be infrangibly meshed—and if he would be faithful to the novel, the filmmaker cannot successfully render one without the other.

Somewhat surprisingly, for he abominated so many 20th-century inventions (especially the telephone), Waugh loved the cinema. He passionately hoped a fine film would be made from *Brideshead*, and refused to commit "artistic suicide" by simply reaching for the most lucrative offer. But he also seems to have had a special fondness for trashy films. As he wrote to Nancy Mitford in 1946:

> I go to the Cinema 4 times a week. I suppose I have seen more bad films than any living man in the last six months. I forget them like dreams the moment I leave the building.

And of course few people have ever derived more pleasure than did Waugh from watching incompetence prevail and plans go awry. The filmmakers of *Brideshead* can take reassurance, then, in knowing that one way or another their finished product would probably have gratified its author.

INNOCENTS ABROAD

Political Pilgrims: Travels of Western Intellectuals to the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba by Paul Hollander

(Oxford University Press, 524 pp., $25)

> Their very way of living led these writers to indulge in abstract theories and generalizations regarding the nature of government, and to place blind confidence in them. For living as they did, quite out of touch with practical politics, they lacked the experience which might have tempered their enthusiasm. Thus they completely failed to perceive the very real obstacles in the way of even the most praiseworthy reforms, and to gauge the perils involved in even the most salutary revolutions. . . .

This is not Paul Hollander on the Western intellectuals of recent times, but Alexis de Tocqueville on the intellectuals of a former age. Skepticism about the shining visions of the intellectual mind is a long and thoroughly respectable tradition, with many great names attached to it (intellectuals themselves, of course). Professor Hollander has performed the invaluable and overdue service of carrying forward this Tocquevillian approach into the present.

Born in Hungary, educated first in Communist Budapest, then at the London School of Economics and Princeton, currently a fellow at Harvard's Russian Research Center and a professor of sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Professor Hollander became interested, sometime in the 1960s, in the travel reports and evaluations written by intellectual Westerners about secretive, "closed," totalitarian societies, one of which he had seen from the inside. The general record, he soon found out, was not mediocre, not indifferent, but appalling. It was plain miserable. And it did not take him long to realize that what these starry-eyed pilgrims wrote about the countries they visited told far more about their estrangement from their own society than it did about the societies they were supposed to be analyzing.

THERE WERE, of course, distinguished exceptions. When Sidney and Beatrice Webb wrote of the OGPU (ancestor of the KGB) that it had achieved "a triumph of human regeneration," Bertrand Russell took sharp issue with them: "The worship of the state . . . led both the Webbs and also Shaw . . . into a rather absurd adulation of the Soviet government." Malcolm Muggeridge has written of voyagers to the Soviet Union:

> Their delight in all they saw and were told, and the expression they gave to this delight, constitute unquestionably one of the wonders of our age. There were earnest advocates of the humane killing of cattle who looked up at the massive headquarters of the OGPU with tears of gratitude in their eyes, earnest advocates of proportional representation who eagerly assented when the necessity for a Dictatorship of the Proletariat was explained to them, earnest clergymen who walked reverently through anti-God museums and reverently turned the pages of atheistic literature, earnest pacifists who watched delightedly tanks rattle across the Red Square and bombing planes darken the sky, earnest town-planning specialists who stood outside overcrowded ramshackle tenements and muttered: 'If only we had something like this in England!' The almost unbelievable credulity of these mostly university-educated tourists astonished even Soviet officials used to handling foreign visitors. . . .

But the Bertrand Russells and Malcolm Muggeridges and André Gides—to whom Professor Hollander scrupulously gives their due—were very much the dissenting voices. In general, celebrated Western intellectuals visiting new totalitarian states, whose language they did not speak, of whose history and true nature they knew nothing,

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were taken by chauffeured limousine on tightly scheduled tours permitting no spontaneous contact with the native population; relentlessly flattered, stroked; and often given sumptuous banquets in the midst of famine. They then returned to their home countries to sing praises of an earthly paradise.

Hollander focuses on three of these earthly paradises: the Soviet Union, Cuba, and China, with an inevitable special section on Vietnam. Charitably, he skips over the pronouncements of the first euphoric visitors to Russia in the 1920s, and so we are spared Lincoln Steffens's celebrated mantra, "I've seen the future and it works." To give the mood of some of these early ecstatics, Hollander tells of G. B. Shaw throwing a great stock of food provisions out his train window before he crossed into the Soviet Union from Poland because he was certain that once the exploiting class was abolished there could never again be such a thing as food shortages. He told this story proudly to Soviet listeners, who greeted the announcement with a gasp. When the wife of a news correspondent told him the Russians were sorry he hadn't at least waited to throw away his food on Soviet territory as there were "terrible" shortages, Shaw looked around the Moscow equivalent of the Oak Room of the Plaza Hotel and asked cutely, "Where do you see any food shortage?"

Generally, however, Hollander gives the 1920s pilgrims the benefit of the doubt. What did they know of Victor Serge? The Kronstadt Rebellion? Lenin's New Economic Policy remained in effect until 1928. There was a great burst of energy among Soviet modern artists.

IN THE 1930s, however, the regime began to show its true face—the forced collectivization of agriculture, massive coercion, deportations, famine, show trials, terror—and Hollander begins to hold utopian pilgrims to strict account. In 1938, a year after the first Moscow Trials, the Webbs republished their book on the Soviet Union in which they expressed the most profuse admiration for the Soviet judicial and penal systems. For the Soviet prison system, it must be remembered, was held up by political pilgrims to the USSR in this period as a model to the world.

Hollander's Soviet material is not entirely new, but some of the passages still make stunning reading. They provide a necessary context in which to consider the writings of the new wave of utopian pilgrims who appeared in the West in the 1960s and 1970s—this time headed for Cuba, Hanoi, and China. The pilgrims of the later period showed some sharp differences from those of the former. In the 1930s the West was in economic crisis, and the pilgrims were in search of a strong, centralized state power that would enforce a "rational" reordering of the world's economic system. In the 1960s the West enjoyed unprecedented prosperity, and the pilgrims, repelled by materialism and "hollow affluence," were in quest of equality, community, "authenticity." Suffering from what they called "repressive tolerance" (an interesting concept in itself), they sought societies free of "repression." How these pilgrims could have found Mao's China, one of the most tightly controlled, fear-ridden, doctrinaire societies in modern history, a land of gentleness and friendly persuasion is one of the marvels of our

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time. But they did. When the preselected, prerehearsed Chinese would repeat mechanically, "I love the Revolution more than I love my own life," the pilgrim would write reverently in his notebook, "Loves Revolution more than own life."

Post-Nixon American visitors to China included an appreciable share of "mainstream" figures. Harrison Salisbury of the *New York Times* described the "May 7 Schools," which forced members of the elite to perform manual labor for as long as two years, as "a combination of YMCA camp and a Catholic retreat." James Reston, of the same newspaper, wrote that the masses of young city people who were sent to do manual work in rural areas "were treating it like . . . an outing in the countryside." Simone de Beauvoir assured her readers that writers in China were not subject to political pressure. Salisbury wrote of a life in China "so simple, so integrated with the land, the weather and the plants that its symmetry seemed almost magical." Dr. Benjamin Spock "never saw children . . . even whining or complaining." On the conservative side, David Rockefeller spoke enthusiastically of China's "sense of national harmony," "more efficient and dedicated administration," and "high morale and community of purpose." The columns of Joseph Alsop were filled with amazement and admiration at what he called "the new China." On economic matters, the liberal J. K. Galbraith thought he discerned "a truly astonishing approach to equality of income. . . . Clearly, there is very little difference between rich and poor" (although Edgar Snow had already reported military pay differentials of 160 to 1). According to Galbraith, under "the Gang of Four" in 1973, "There can be no doubt that China is devising a highly efficient economic system." As for Shirley MacLaine, actress and political thinker, women in China "had little need or even desire for such superficial things as frilly clothes and makeup. . . ." During her China trip, Miss MacLaine herself gave up smoking, biting her nails, and even picking her fingers. The pilgrims to China included people uncharacteristic in some ways of the typical utopian pilgrim, in that they went to China in the wake of Richard Nixon, and saw in Peking the enemy of their true adversary, Moscow. This did not automatically guarantee skepticism.

Another conspicuous difference between the two generations of voyagers is that the seekers of the 1930s, when they became disillusioned with the Soviet Union, did not slip away quietly. Whether actually Communists, or sympathizers, or affiliated to some other left-wing socialist grouping, their spectacular denunciations of the Soviet system became part of the intellectual history of the age. Gide. Orwell. Koestler. Silone. Malraux. Spender. Wright. Djilas. They had made a mistake of gigantic magnitude. Matters of the utmost gravity were at stake. They would not be silent.

IT IS PERHAPS a comment on our times that the political pilgrims of the last two decades have felt no such responsibility. As the rapture for Cuba faded, along came Hanoi. And as the rapture for Hanoi faded, along came China. Political pilgrims have shown a consistent weakness for regimes that present a facade of total and brazen self-assurance; when a new Chinese leadership exposed the horrifying brutalities of its immediate predecessor in 1978 (as had a new Soviet leadership two decades earlier), the dream of a Chinese utopia was shattered and the pilgrims, hardly chastened at all, simply displaced their dreams to Albania, Mozambique, Angola—the more remote the better. The latest place I have heard of where "socialism really works" (and this from one of the stars of Professor Hollander's book) is North Korea.

And through all this we have heard no *mea culpas*. Today's political pilgrims acknowledge no accountability for their earlier follies. Instead they drift on in an eternal, luminous present, their quite considerable fame untarnished. One would think the intellectual world would keep an informal list of Disgraced Persons whose judgment on political matters is not to be trusted. But it does not. Which is why Hollander's book is absolutely essential reading, not only for its critique of the writings of our millenial voyagers, but for the service of gathering together the essence of their reports. For, strange as it might seem—perhaps another comment on the times—this has never been done.

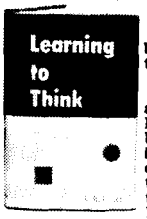
ON THE WHOLE, Hollander's choice of quotations is fair and representative. He does not always choose the most outlandish or shaming pronouncements, but prefers ones that give evidence of the writer's state of mind. Mary McCarthy, for example, faced with the large-scale massacre at Hue in South Vietnam when it fell to Communist forces, could not accept that the Communist side had committed it. "I should prefer to think it was the Americans . . .," she said. When Frances Fitzgerald, famous celebrant of the "cleansing" flame of the Vietnamese revolution, criticizes childish enthusiasts in Cuba, he dutifully records. When whatever mild acts of self-reproach as have been registered by the pilgrims have appeared, he gives them such credit as is due. Susan Sontag, reviewing her politics of the 1960s in an interview in 1980, said, "When I was in Cuba and North Vietnam, it was not clear to me then that they would become Soviet satellites, but history has been cruel . . . " (rather more cruel to the Cubans and Vietnamese than to Miss Sontag). Mary McCarthy, in an interview in 1979, said,

> As for my current views on Vietnam, it's all rather daunting. I've several times contemplated writing a real letter to Pham Van Dong (I get a Christmas card from him every year) asking him can't you stop this, how is it possible for men like you to permit what's going on?

It does not seem to have occurred to Miss McCarthy that Pham Van Dong is not the man she thought he was. But, as I say, the pilgrims of the last decades have hardly been rending the heavens with cries of self-incrimination. None of these errant intellectuals has approached the straightforward tone of a mere entertainer, Yves Montand, who said recently to a Paris newspaper, "We were dumb. And we were dangerous."

Hollander ranks the reasons for the gross errors of perception of our political pilgrims in the following order: 1) a favorable predisposition to admire the society visited; 2) royal treatment during the visit, chauffeured limousines,

LEARNING TO THINK



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luxurious accommodations, sumptuous food, unstinting flattery, ready access to extremely powerful people (this second reason is to me the most shocking, but there is abundant evidence of its effectiveness); and 3) the highly selective "Potemkin tour" nature of the visit. Simon Leys said in *Chinese Shadows* that of 800 million Chinese, a foreigner met "about 60"—and always the same handful of professional greeters. The visitor sees extremely little, often behaves as if nothing of importance happened in the country's history before he set foot there, has no unrehearsed contact with the native population—whose language he doesn't speak in any case. Yet he somehow persuades himself that the tiny sampling he is shown is representative and gives him an adequate picture of the society as a whole. When two "waitresses" from the dining car of G. B. Shaw's railway train came eagerly to pay him homage, spoke excellent English, and knew his works intimately, Shaw, in perfect confidence, duly expressed the view that Russian waitresses were better read than English waitresses.

Often, if the favorable predisposition is powerful enough, the visitor can be moved to ecstasy by sights which in his own country would leave him cold or even repel him. Pablo Neruda (in 1949) was moved to a state of mystic lyricism in Russia at the sight of village mud. Theodore Dreiser wrote that there were beggars in the streets of Moscow, "But Lord, how picturesque! The multicolored and voluminous rags of them!" And of course the most notorious example: visitors who consider the transport of human excrement the ultimate in degradation in their own country regard an intellectual who carries "night soil" to the fields in China as the ultimate proof of the authenticity and soulfulness of socialism.

AND WHAT IS the origin of this favorable predisposition on the part of our pilgrims? There is no way around this one. They are predisposed to admire other societies because they are estranged from their own. And why are they estranged from their own? Professor Hollander's explanation situates itself in an eminently reputable, even venerable tradition, associated with the names of Durkheim, Max Weber, Joseph Schumpeter, and of course Tocqueville.

The modern, secular, democratic world, in Max Weber's words, is one in which the "ultimate and sublime values" have retreated. "The salvation sought by the intellectual is always based on inner need," he wrote,

> and hence it is at once more remote from life, more theoretical and more systematic than salvation from external distress, the quest for which is characteristic of nonprivileged classes. The intellectual seeks in various ways . . . to endow his life with a pervasive meaning. . . . That conflict of this requirement of meaningfulness with the empirical realities of the world and its institutions . . . [is] responsible for the intellectual's characteristic flights from the world.

It is one of the paradoxes of modern life that intellectuals, once thought to be in the vanguard of secularization, dedicated to freeing society from fixed, archaic, magical beliefs, now include, to the contrary, many of the most recalcitrant and desperate hangers-back, who find a world without ultimate and sublime values unbearable.

Schumpeter, carrying Weber's point further, acknowledged bleakly that capitalism, of itself, creates "spiritual hungers it cannot gratify," while Durkheim, writing at the turn of the century and expanding on a far older idea of Tocqueville, sounded what might be the most ominous note of all. Once the nature of the social order ceases to be taken for granted and its basic beliefs are closely examined and questioned, the social

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fabric begins to unravel.

There can be no question that for many intellectuals—and this would include almost all the starry-eyed travelers Hollander deals with—something they called "socialism" seemed the magic elixir that would give meaning to life again, bring harmony, equality, authenticity, a sense of community, unity of purpose. I need hardly add that this belief in the exalting power of what they regarded as socialism is never ever shared by those doomed to live in a totalitarian socialist state. The bitter experience of Poland is only the most recent example. (One of the most vehement denunciations of this type of society I have ever heard was from a Polish woman, just a few months ago, who hissed through clenched teeth that it was a system "invented by the Devil!") None of this, of course, would embarrass our Western utopian pilgrims; it would establish only that Poland did not have "true" socialism. They have been let down by the Soviet Union, Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, China, and Guinea-Bissau, but see no reason for abandoning their holy quest. And it's on to Albania and North Korea.

Another mark of the utopian pilgrim—and of many of his supporters who remain behind—is his almost unthinking acceptance of Lenin's dictum: "The people don't want freedom, they want boots." Unfortunately this belief is almost always accompanied by the equally unquestioning assumption that in nations where freedom does not exist, but where the means of production are entirely in the hands of a gigantic state bureaucracy, the population's material needs will be better provided for than under Western or traditional systems. This flies in the face of all the evidence, which shows, over any substantial period of time, that people who have no freedom don't get boots either. But, as I say, why be disheartened? Perhaps Albania will do the trick.

HOLLANDER has been accused of "defaming" the entire intellectual class. That is not true. He says this:

> It should be clear by now that the wish to believe marks the attitudes of intellectuals as much as the need to criticize, negate, and reject. . . . There is ample evidence . . . to suggest that the critical component in the make-up of intellectuals has been greatly exaggerated and that its operation is just as dependent on their basic values and predispositions as is the case with other mortals.

Professor Hollander is not wildly optimistic. He recognizes the weak bonds of community in our secular, individualistic world as well as the sense of powerlessness felt by most citizens of our complex mega-states. But his book is a long overdue cautionary tale warning Western intellectuals against a systematic denigration of their own society to the advantage of others, secretive and remote, about which they know next to nothing, but which they nonetheless venerate as shining triumphs of the human spirit.

Since politics remains "the art of the possible," and a modern society might not be able to survive without the support of an intellectual class, Professor Hollander has not merely written an excellent book. He has rendered a service to the Republic.

RICHARD GRENIER

Richard Grenier, a novelist, has reported on Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, and visited Yugoslavia, East Germany, and the Soviet Union. He now writes on film for *Commentary*.

CIVILITIES OF THE HEART

Philadelphia: Patricians & Philistines, 1900-1950
by John Lukacs

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 315 pp., $15)

It is only in the first and final chapters of his new book on Philadelphia that historian John Lukacs actually writes about Philadelphia itself, and in doing so he is at once wistful, witty, caustic, entertaining, and informative, portraying the city as it was in 1900 and in 1950, the years he has picked for his time frame. Philadelphia in 1900, we are told, covered an area larger even than London and boasted the largest city park in the world. It was a "town" of families and neighborhoods, "somnolent," with a feeling—still—of "Sunday evening kindness in the air." Privacy and decorousness, "the interior life," were what mattered. Prominent English visitors like Kipling and Arnold Bennett pronounced it the most English of our cities, which probably it was. There were fewer foreign-born and there was less social mobility than in any American city of the day. Fine restaurants were nonexistent, we further learn, the local bread uniformly substandard; among the better families—another curious fact—it was the custom for the men to make mayonnaise.

Decidedly, it was no atmosphere for the intellectual or the artist. When Mary Cassatt returned for a visit, the *Ledger* reported in its social column only that she was studying painting in Paris and owned the smallest Pekinese dog in the world. Nor were things to improve greatly as time passed. By 1950 Philadelphia could claim "one of the worst morning papers of any great city" (the *Inquirer*) and "philistinism reigned supreme" at the vaunted American Philosophical Society. Not even the Philadelphia lawyer was what he used to be (which, according to the author, was a champion of civic law and civic order). The charm of the place was to be found tucked away in "nooks and crannies."

> Much of the coziness, the slowness, the warmth, the privacy of the Philadelphia spirit continued to prevail. They were not always palpable to visitors; for a visitor in a hotel, bereft of friends or acquaintances in Philadelphia, a weekend in this city remained as dreary as ever. There were, however, things remnant in the Philadelphia nooks and crannies—snowy afternoons in Germantown before Christmas, with yellow lights shining serenely out of the gray-stone Quaker houses, with all the promises of decency and of the sentimental warmth of an American small town; the corruscating lights through the fog settling on Rittenhouse Square, muffled and elegant, reminiscent of a vanished London; Reading Terminal Market, with a thin coating of sawdust on its

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floors and its stalls heavy with mountains of produce, sides of meat, shimmering hills of fish equal to the best in the market halls of Europe; the inimitable and irreproducible scent of old Chester County farmhouses inhabited by Philadelphians, a potpourri redundant of furniture polish, mustiness, and freshly dusted carpets; the stores in Chestnut Hill, managed by descendants of their owners and founders, crisp and straight in their tweeds, knowing everyone, though not at all; the flowers in ironstone bowls and vases, everywhere. There was something Philadelphian in the smell of the sea in the remaining oyster houses as well as in the well-lit dining room of the Barclay Hotel, so very different from the rich hotel restaurants of New York even in the 1950s, with its own kind of a smart provinciality, with a dependable majority of recognizable faces all-around. . . . If Philadelphia was twenty years behind New York, so be it.

To Mr. Lukacs, who was born in Budapest in 1924 and first arrived in Philadelphia after World War II, the appeal of the city derived chiefly from "odd survivals of an earlier and better century," which, he writes, have nothing to do with artifacts or architecture but with "certain civilities of the heart."

It may have been dull, he seems to be saying, but it was lovable and, being behind the times, a touch more humane than other cities. And that is largely all he has to say directly on the subject, the rest of the book being devoted instead to portraits of seven Philadelphians of renown, an entirely personal selection as it happens and one that would be easy to argue with (there are no Quakers among them, no Jews or blacks, and only one woman) and that produces in all a delightful effect. Indeed, few cities can claim as lively and refreshing a portrait in miniature as this one, for the very reason that Mr. Lukacs has chosen to write about the people he has and with such spirit. He is an historian with great feeling for human nature, as well as for the pathos and humor in history. That his seven subjects are people of relatively limited reputation beyond Philadelphia makes the book all the more fascinating and commendable. The strongest of his portraits is of someone this reader, for one, had never heard of before.

The first of the seven is the remarkable Boies Penrose, a Harvard contemporary of Theodore Roosevelt, who, like Roosevelt, broke from his patrician background to become a full-time politico, only of a kind that Roosevelt and every true gentleman reformer of the day spurned as they would the devil himself. Penrose was the glorious, outsized example that proves that good breeding—even good Philadelphia breeding—does not necessarily lead to noble public service. As Mr. Lukacs writes, "Penrose threw himself into the muddy pool of politics because he liked low company." Though talented, intelligent, a great reader and collector of books, he was cynical, physically gross, and unkempt, with food stains on his clothes, a great wanton who rented a woman whenever he wanted one and periodically drank himself into a stupor. He was also one of the few Philadelphians ever to achieve national importance politically. As a United States Senator and Republican boss of Pennsylvania he steered his course by the self-expressed rule that "the people are all right, but their tastes are simple: they dearly love hokum."

After Penrose come Agnes Repplier, an essayist and author; Edward Bok, who was editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*; the diplomat William Bullitt; Senator George Wharton Pepper, who was Penrose's successor; Owen Wister, author of *The Virginian*; and the terrible-tempered Dr. Albert Coombs Barnes, a poor boy who made good (he invented the medical compound Argyrol) and who amassed one of the country's outstanding collections of modern art. The portraits of Penrose and Barnes are particularly vivid. Mr. Lukacs warms to both men as much for their capacity to see through pretense as for their eccentricities. Neither was an elitist. Both were at heart desperately lonely. Much of the writing is memorable.

The least successful portrait, the least interesting certainly, is that of George Wharton Pepper. But maybe every good act does need a straight man, and in that role Pepper is about perfect. A lawyer, a Republican, and an Episcopalian, he was the perennial collegiate in narrow flannels and saddle shoes, a Phi Beta Kappa key on his watch fob. Mr. Lukacs, with possibly a touch of malice, calls him the quintessential Philadelphian. "Guardedness marked his brief career in the Senate."

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The most absorbing and vital figure to emerge in Mr. Lukacs's gallery, however, is the one who would seem to have led the least interesting life, the lone woman, Agnes Repplier. It is a marvelous portrait he has given us, the longest chapter in the book, and if there is any justice it will spark an Agnes Repplier revival.

She was born in Philadelphia to a German Catholic family who was financially hard put. At about age 20 she began to write and in time produced more than two dozen books and some 400 essays, while seldom leaving Philadelphia for longer than necessary. She loved city life, as she loved her work, Spain, and good conversation. She abhored the drift to the suburbs as she abhored the Brownings and Bostonians. She wrote beautifully, elegantly. "I used to think that ignorance of history meant only a lack of cultivation and a loss of pleasure," she wrote in *Points of Friction*. "Now I am sure that such ignorance impairs our judgment by impairing our understanding, by depriving us of standards, or the power to contrast, and the right to estimate." Other observations of hers quoted by Mr. Lukacs include these:

> If knowledge alone could save us from sin, the salvation of the world would be easy work.
>
> The appalling grin with which men and women are photographed for the press is as remote from gaiety as from reason.

She was a dowdy, plain, solitary person who looked like a schoolmarm of the late Victorian variety, except that she smoked cigarettes incessantly. Never married, she lived to be 95; she was celebrated as a literary personage almost from the time she first appeared in print, and the quality of her work grew steadily.

European-born John Lukacs sees her as "the finest of Americans," more like Willa Cather than Edith Wharton. "She saw in the United States the potentiality for what was best in the world: not the last best hope of mankind, but something somberer and greater: the representative and the repository of the heritage of Western civilization." That she triumphed as a writer "against all odds"—by which he means being "plunked down in the dullest portion of dullest Philadelphia"—also lends her, in his eyes, a heroic aura and it is with a note of praise for Philadelphia women in general that he ends the book. The women, overall, have been stronger than the men, he concludes: "they were more deeply civilized."

That he has chosen to write the book he has—one can easily imagine an editor asking incredulously, "On *Philadelphia*?"—and in the way he has deserves our praise. For giving us Agnes Repplier with such verve he deserves our abiding thanks.

DAVID MCCULLOUGH

David McCullough grew up in Pittsburgh, which, he says, is 300 miles and worlds apart from Philadelphia. He is the author of the current best seller, *Mornings on Horseback* (Simon and Schuster).

INFERNAL MEDICINE

Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment by James H. Jones

(Free Press, 272 pp., $14.95)

During the summer of 1972, press reports describing the Tuskegee Syphilis Study brought the experiment to a sudden halt amidst cries of racism and scandal. For 40 years, these reports charged, the United States Public Health Service had deliberately withheld medical treatment from some 400 syphilitic black men in rural Alabama. The experiment sought to determine the harm this disease would do if left untreated; it proved what physicians already largely knew: at least 28 and perhaps as many as 100 of the men had died as a result of the disease, while others suffered the baneful consequences of blindness or insanity. News of the study was received as another instance of the excesses of modern medicine. Although a federal investigatory panel soon issued a report declaring the experiment "ethically unjustified," questions concerning the study's purpose, design, and conduct remain.

James Jones's *Bad Blood* is the fullest account yet available of this tragic experiment. Relying upon relevant archival sources as well as interviews with surviving participants, Jones provides a detailed narrative of what happened in Tuskegee.

PHYSICIANS FROM the Public Health Service originally traveled to Tuskegee in the fall of 1932 in order to identify and examine a group of men who had never received treatment for their syphilitic infections. These doctors hoped the examinations would provide new knowledge about the so-called "natural history" of the disease—the damage it inflicts when left untreated. To enlist the cooperation of this group of largely illiterate sharecroppers, the Public Health Service told the subjects they had "bad blood," a Southern black colloquialism for a number of maladies, and promised them free treatment. In practice, "treatment" was rather broadly defined. Although during the initial phase of the study many of the men received inadequate treatment for their infections, subsequently the Public Health Service provided only deceptive treatment: aspirin and "spring tonic" (a variety of mineral oil). Spinal taps, purely diagnostic procedures which often entail considerable pain and some danger, were presented to the men as a "special free treatment."

After the first six months of collecting data about the condition of these men, the federal physicians decided it would be valuable to observe them until they died and autopsies could be performed. Then and only then, they argued, could the long-term consequences of the disease be investigated and conclusively described. The Public Health Service continued to provide only placebos which maintained the interest of the subjects, but did nothing for their health. This deception—that expert government doctors were providing care for the subjects' illnesses—persisted until the experiment was halted in 1972.

In reality, the Public Health Service deliberately sought to deny the test subjects appropriate therapy. During the

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40 years that the experiment continued, the federally employed physicians repeatedly took measures to ensure that the men received no effective treatment whatsoever. Public health officials visited Tuskegee to request that local physicians turn away any test subject seeking medical attention for their venereal ailments. In the 1940s, when mobile treatment units sponsored by the Public Health Service traveled to Alabama, they were provided a list of men to exclude from care. The PHS also requested that draft boards forgo treating some of the men whose infections had been discovered during military physical examinations. Even when penicillin became widely available in the late 1940s as the treatment of choice for syphilis—greatly preferable to the toxic arsenic compounds previously used—the Public Health Service apparently did not consider providing it to the test subjects. Indeed, one physician who worked on the study lamented that the widespread availability of antibiotics from other sources might "defeat" the experiment. The entire study, in fact, violated a number of Alabama state laws that required treatment of serious communicable diseases.

FROM A scientific standpoint the experiment was strikingly inept. Jones points out that the study, despite its promoters' claims, never assessed untreated syphilis because many of the men received some treatment—however inadequate—during the first six months. When healthy members of a control group became infected, they were merely shifted to the study group and left untreated—a practice that completely disregards standard scientific procedure requiring a rigid distinction between subjects and controls. As most scientists agree, a poorly designed or carelessly conducted experiment is in itself unethical; to place subjects in jeopardy and to produce findings with no validity is to violate this most basic precept of medical research. In 1969 a physician reviewing the Tuskegee study at the federally operated Center for Disease Control admitted, "Nothing learned will prevent, find, or cure a single case of infectious syphilis or bring us closer to our basic mission of controlling venereal disease in the United States." Nevertheless, the same doctor recommended that the study be continued "along its present lines." The momentum of neglect—and negligence—had been firmly established.

Richly detailed and rigorously researched, *Bad Blood* provides answers to many of the questions left hanging nearly a decade ago, but it offers little in the way of new explanation. Jones correctly contends that the causes of the Tuskegee study were complex. Anxious to avoid a simplistic, knee-jerk reaction to this scandal, he catalogs a number of factors—moral relativism, medical racism, scientific arrogance, bureaucratic insensitivity, as well as good intentions—that led to the initial conception of the experiment and its continuation for so many years. But he gives the reader no indication about how to weigh these variables. Jones wavers between applauding the Public Health Service physicians' commitment to black health and castigating them for deceiving innocent victims. Moreover, in his desire to understand the doctors responsible for this scandal, Jones at times comes dangerously close to accepting the rationalizations that they themselves offered for the experiment. He remains so deeply ambivalent about the meaning of the study that he muddles his analysis.

The doctors who organized the Tuskegee study, however committed they may have been to expanding health services for the poor, nevertheless accepted prevailing racial assumptions about blacks, sex, and disease—beliefs that genuinely warped their science. It had long been held within the medical profession that almost all blacks, because of their "lustful" sexual natures, acquired venereal disease. Socioeconomic explanations for the poor state of black health were generally discounted. Moreover, it was assumed that blacks could not be educated sufficiently about the seriousness of this malady to seek and continue the arduous therapy required. Thus, it seemed only "natural" to the Public Health Service to study the impact of the disease upon the race. Tuskegee provided what one of the study's creators declared a "ready-made situation."

JONES REFUSES to accept that the physicians who designed and carried out the study, leading figures of the American public health establishment, could have accepted the endemic racist perceptions that he so clearly documents in the profession-at-large. At one point he writes:

> In short, the PHS officials behind the Tuskegee Study were racial liberals by the standards of the 1930s. Within the medical profession they were truly progressive. They began the experiment because they were interested in black health, in studying the effects of syphilis on black people.

Jones seems reluctant to admit that American liberalism has distressingly often been tainted by racial prejudice and arrogance. Accordingly, he offers a defense for the Tuskegee study which suggests that it might have been intended by its creators to demonstrate the need to provide treatment for indigent blacks—a scenario for which no evidence exists and which would not dispel the fact that the experiment was ultimately based on racist notions.

THOUGH *Bad Blood* goes to considerable lengths to establish a context for the experiment, Jones fails to provide sufficient background on the history of medical research. Experimentation with human subjects is the standard upon which medical advance must rest: the final test is the human test. Far too often, however, the scientific community has exacted the price of progress from those for whom health care has been available only at experimental risk. Indeed, during most of the 19th century, physicians and medical students learned their trade by experimenting on indigent patients at hospitals and public dispensaries. Paying patients benefited from this newly won expertise in the privacy of their homes. The poor, the imprisoned, blacks, women, children, and the aged have contributed disproportionately to the march of medical science. Even today, while protected by federal guidelines passed in the wake of the Tuskegee study, clinic patients remain at higher risk of finding themselves included in research protocols. Perhaps the most objectionable aspect of the Tuskegee experiment was

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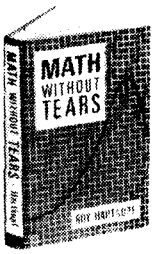

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the way it traded upon the subjects' desire to receive quality medical care. "We trusted them because of what we thought they could do for us, for our physical condition," recounted one surviving participant. Another test subject commented, "I thought they was doing me good."

ALLAN M. BRANDT

Allan M. Brandt teaches medical ethics at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. He is currently writing a social history of venereal disease in the United States.

MYSTERIES

"A critic's attitude toward a work of literature is comparable to that of a detective at the scene of a crime. A novel, like a corpse, is approached by professionals as an enigma requiring a solution." What both need is a mediating intelligence. With this insight Dennis Porter begins the conclusion to his intelligent analysis of "Art and Ideology in Detective Fiction," in *The Pursuit of Crime* (Yale University Press, $20). This book is one of the few academic examinations of crime fiction that avoids the two common errors: Porter is neither overly solemn or stridently defensive, nor does he consider the detective story as simply one aspect of popular, mass culture. Instead Porter agilely employs his knowledge of critical literature, and though he is a professor of French, he does not believe the French structuralists have had the last say; he also clearly knows his crime fiction. The result is a series of cool essays on "the detective novel as readable text," "the erotics of narrative," or "backward construction and the art of suspense," which entertainingly tell us why we like to read murder mysteries. There are not many critical works on the genre which a devotee of, say, Georges Simenon might enjoy, but this is one.

Porter is rightly interested only in those writers who have built up a substantial body of work; he wants to comment on their growth, persistence, or decline. A reviewer, however, is meant to keep an eye out for the less-known, fresh writer who has no track record, or whose record remains relatively obscure. One such writer is K. C. Constantine, who has long been one of my favorites. He wrote four books in rapid succession and then virtually dropped from sight; now he is back with *The Man Who Liked Slow Tomatoes* (Godine, $12.95), which should bring an entirely new group of readers into the acutely observed Pennsylvania coal town of Rocksburg. Constantine has a truly unusual ear for the speech of the American ethnic communities, with its generational and class nuance, and he is especially aware of how commonplace obscenities are used to imply wildly different emotions. The actual element of mystery is slight—one sees the "solution" rather early on—but this makes the book all the more enjoyable, since one can focus on the writer's primary interest, the flow of language from the so-called inarticulate. This book is worth a text in sociology.

Another excellent tale is told by B. M. Gill in *Suspect* (Scribner's, $9.95). Gill's first book, *Death Drop*, was well received; this one is even better. It is about a neurosurgeon whose nursing aide, daughter, and mistress are murdered by a psychopathic killer. Without being voyeuristic, Gill shows a sure sense of how people think about sex: she knows when sex is a motive and when it is merely an excuse for motives more deeply buried within the animal. The book is somewhat marred by a rather perfunctory resolution. But until the final chapter, *Suspect* is genuinely what its dust jacket proclaims, a novel full of suspense.

PERHAPS LESS enjoyable, yet more worthy of our memory, is M. K. Wren's latest, *Seasons of Death*. Wren's fifth novel, and a Crime Club book, *Seasons of Death* (Doubleday, $9.95) is marked by the slightly awkward stigmata of the Crime Club Selections, which generally seem content simply to entertain for an evening. But *Seasons of Death* rises above its predecessors because its detective, Conan Flagg, at last seems believable. And Wren, carefully gathering details, brings to life real places—in this case the Owyhee country of eastern Oregon and southwestern Idaho, and the villages of Murphy and Silver City. The story is about a body discovered in an abandoned mine 40 years after its disappearance. Flagg pries and pokes into the past to find out how and why. He is served by coincidence and plot manipulation, and some readers will find the book irritating for these reasons; yet, in staying with it, one discovers what Porter was talking about when he wrote, in *The Pursuit of Crime*, of "the landscape of detection": how a crime may grow out of a place and be in time revealed by that place.

ROBIN W. WINKS

BRIEF REVIEWS

Fear Itself
by Stefan Kanfer

(G. P. Putnam's Sons, 215 pp., $12.95)

There has been a good deal of junk written about the Holocaust, a lot of it by scholars, a lot of it by thriller-writers. Inferior writing about such nearly unbelievable matters supports the protests of survivors, their families, and fellow bearers of witness that the Final Solution and the eradication of ethnic minorities and "social problems" by the Nazis should not be the stuff of fiction or poetry.

Fortunately for those of us who respectfully dissent, there has been a great deal of excellent fiction written recently on the Holocaust. I might commend the searing and controversial short story "Waiting at Dachau," by Reynolds Price; Leslie Epstein's gentle and brilliant novel, *King of the Jews*; some might add D. M. Thomas's *The White Hotel*; few would argue about Schwarz-Bart's *The Last of the Just*, or "The Shawl," a story by Cynthia Ozick that is read only through tears.

While *Fear Itself* does not fall solidly into this latter category, it surely escapes the former. It is a solid, intelligent, and exciting thriller that works like very few in that genre: it is often better than the context in which we read it, whereas most thrillers are like slices of Wonder Bread, unnourishing and interchangeable. *Fear Itself* does not make a reader feel ashamed for having read it; and it will, like the best, at times stretch us.

Niccolo Levi, an Italian Jew, is hunted by the Nazis in 1943 while he himself hunts for his wife and child. He follows them, on the service of the Italian underground, and on his own service, into the death camp where they meet—what else was there?—their death. Levi, crazed, pursues the emblem of a world

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that permits such dyings—Franklin D. Roosevelt, the American President, who is also a character in the novel.

In alternating chapters, we see Levi the Jew being hunted by Carl Berlin, an American Jewish agent, who is in turn hunted by the Butcher, a psychopathic Nazi killer at loose in America whom Berlin originally was seeking. There would perhaps be too much plot, and insufficient character for it, were it not for Kanfer's excellent creation of Levi's quest for vengeance, and were it not for the presence—and the issue—of Roosevelt himself.

We all know by now that Roosevelt knew, thanks to Henry Morgenthau and to Allied intelligence, as much as he needed to know about death camps in general and Auschwitz in particular. He could well have bombed the tracks between Hungary and Poland and the Auschwitz-Birkenau gas chambers. He was advised not to; he did not. No satisfactory explanation for this failure has been offered—no reasons of strategy stand up: Auschwitz was a very few kilometers from strategic targets which the Allies bombed. At one point, in 1944, the Air Corps dropped bombs, by mistake, so close to Auschwitz that SS men and inmates were actually killed. One concludes, as several historians have suggested, and as Kanfer concludes, that anti-Semitism at home in Washington and among our Allies, along with bad advice from bigots and Roosevelt's own bigotry, were responsible for the awful failure to act.

Kanfer tries to be fair to Roosevelt, and when FDR is portrayed, periodically, it is through internal monologues as well as third-person description. The internal monologues reveal that Kanfer, despite his efforts, cannot approve of the President; for he writes from within as if from outside. So that, near death, Roosevelt is made to think: "My skull holds a world of chaos, worse than the one outside." One tends not to believe that one is eavesdropping on a character's thoughts, reading that sort of exterior perception. I imagine that Kanfer finally dislikes the man, as I disliked the man in Kanfer's book; FDR's language here gives that enmity away.

But there are fine touches—as when Roosevelt, having condemned Jews for answering questions with questions, unwittingly does precisely that; the camps are evoked but not celebrated, employed but not shabbily used; the Jewish colony in Hollywood, with its simultaneous greed, wit, and generosity, is made a locale for a good deal of the action. And there is plenty of action, plenty of pursuit, some happy and unhappy sex—itself a clue to the novel's surprise ending—and a concluding line that reminds us of the honorableness of Kanfer's purposes—to speak on behalf of the dead.

FREDERICK BUSCH

Frederick Busch's most recent novel is *Take This Man* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

One Third of a Nation
edited by Richard Lowitt and Maurine Beasley

(University of Illinois Press, 385 pp., $18.95)

Although historians credit Eleanor Roosevelt as the eyes and ears of the New Deal, Lorena Hickok (nicknamed Hick), a top AP reporter—big, masculine, tough, hard-drinking, over-eating, fast-writing, and in love with Eleanor—may have been the eyes and ears behind the eyes and ears. Her letters, which went to her boss, Harry Hopkins, administrator of Federal Emergency Relief, and to Eleanor, suggest that Hick's reporting of the Great Depression had considerable impact on the big time players of the New Deal. Reading the letters, it becomes clear to me that Mrs. Roosevelt's good works may have been fired by Hickok's reports.

In 1933 at the bottom of the Depression—only Americans could call fires and depressions great—Congress gave Hopkins $500 million for relief funding and Hopkins (whose assignment, like Hick's, came through Mrs. Roosevelt's direct influence) sent out investigators to see how relief was working. Hopkins told investigator Hickok: "Tell me what you see and hear. Don't ever pull punches." With that dictum from her boss, Hick drove across America alone—an act of bravura for a single woman in those days—to find out what the country was thinking. She pulled no punches.

One Third of a Nation is a collection of Hick's reports. Unlike the convoluted government documents one is accustomed to, these reports are really letters: persuasive, immediate, fiery, simple, direct, and memorable. The fear and hopelessness of the times are still palpable. The people are still vivid. What Hick gave to her letters was passion.

> Whereupon I proceeded to tell that gentleman about the children I'd seen running about with bare feet in Bottineau county, North Dakota who were clawing mildewed Russian thistle out of the stacks they had cut for their cattle and making it into soup, about those absolutely dry ranges on the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota, about cattle I'd seen, so weak they could barely walk, about horses that dropped dead from starvation when they tried to work them on the roads, about stock that had died from eating so much dirt with the grass roots that they had to dig up out of the ground to get anything at all. Maybe I shouldn't have, but I was so damned mad. I thought perhaps I could drive into what he calls his head the idea that perhaps there were other parts of this country worse off than Humboldt county, Nevada, and that possibly in those parts of the country relief was going to cost quite a bit this winter, with the result that states like Nevada might not be able to have quite EVERYTHING they wanted. I don't think I succeeded. But I hope he is feeling a little calmer by now. And maybe he'll think about those things occasionally. That stuff about the cattle dying from mudballs in their stomachs seemed to make a little dent. What a people we are!

Hick was a quick-study. She could smell out a town in a few hours. She had her own network of newspapermen. Her genius was in getting the story from people. In each town she heard the gripes, the kicks, the troubles. She sat down with waitresses, farmers, industrialists, and taxi drivers. She tramped to poor homes on the plains, through blizzards to transient camps,

"IF YOU WANT to take over a big corporation, there are two ways of going about it. One might be called the Mobil method, and the other the Mitterrand method. To pursue the Mobil method you must already have chosen to run some other big corporation. No business experience is needed to pursue the Mitterrand method; indeed, it would be rather a handicap."

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and even, she reported, slept with a murderess because there was only one bed. If the bureaucrats back in Washington didn't like the goshes, the gollies, the phooies, and goddamn its, at least they knew what was happening out there in the country when they read Hick's reports.

Hick was a better reporter than she was a thinker. She went out blaming the mess she found on greed and politicians. She came back confused. Sometimes she was too quick a study, working by osmosis rather than reflection, expressing biases that shifted suddenly at the next station stop. Nonetheless, her shifts still give us immediate impressions of the nation's thinking.

> Whatever NRA may have done to improve this situation you could hardly see it with naked eyes. Sure there's a minimum wage. It's also the MAXIMUM wage. And, legally or illegally, it's broken down into an hourly rate so that it doesn't MEAN anything. What's the use of working, I ask you, if you can't even earn enough to live on? Might as well be on relief.

But then she does a turnabout and blames the people who are on relief for taking government money rather than working. At one point, quite fed up with the Roosevelt socialist solutions, she writes:

> After nearly a year of traveling about this country . . . if I were 20 years younger and weighed 75 pounds less I think I'd start out to be the Joan of Arc of the Fascist movement in the United States. Nobody seems to think any more that this thing is going to work.

And, ultimately, just as she recommended over and over again, Federal Emergency Relief became Works Progress Administration. Men were given jobs and cash, instead of shaming relief.

Hick's inconsistencies and turnabouts mirrored those of the nation. She was not a historian; she was a skilled reporter. Right as she often was, she could be dead wrong. She rails against blacks as animals. She had never before met deep Southern illiterate laborers and couldn't see why they should get relief money when "good material" whites were in need and had to lower their own standards of living.

What Hick didn't see was that equal wage mandates from Washington suddenly raised the expectations of the poor second-class citizen in the South and Southwest. She felt the sudden increase in living standards would be a disaster for the poor. She didn't see the whole picture: things would never be the same again. As shocking as some of her diatribes are, as arrogant as her positions are, her humanity overrides her errors. Hick's reports aren't about the nation; they are from the nation.

Before Mrs. Roosevelt arranged Hick's job with Hopkins, Hick was assigned by AP to cover Mrs. Roosevelt as the President's wife. Hick was swept away by the dream of the New Deal, by the loneliness of Eleanor, and, almost at once, by a terrible crush on the first lady. The further I read into the letters and recognized the power of the writing, the angrier I became. Just as FDR had used ex-newspaperman Louis Howe for his kingmaker, I suspect Eleanor cast a very willing and smitten Hick in the role of her queenmaker. Torn between career and devotion, Hick became Eleanor's confidante, newsmaker, and personal reporter. She soon lost her credibility with AP. Although she mentions in one letter that she expects to go back into reporting, she spent the rest of her life doing publicist work and ragtail jobs gained through Eleanor's influence. She never reported again. Failing, she continued to live at Eleanor's largesse—a crazy old lady, the Hyde Park neighbors gossiped, walking around in her underwear, smoking constantly, strange. A sad and wasted ending.

But with the publication of her letters, Lorena Hickok regains her lost stature and gives the reader insight into the Depression that ranks not only with the best of histories but also as a landmark model of government reporting. *One Third of a Nation* is a valuable contribution. Only one item niggles: the editors "edited out" Hick's errors and repeats. Somehow the holes and the dangling threads can tell more about the wearer than the garment itself. The tampering, even at so slight a level, may obscure nothing at all. Nevertheless, I would have chosen otherwise.

RHODA LERMAN

Rhoda Lerman is the author of *Eleanor: A Novel* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston).

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London Diarist

Foul Play

WHATEVER WENT WRONG with the British Foreign Office? Hardly a week now passes without the exposure of another diplomat who was smoothly suborned into treachery by Soviet agents. Edward Scott, latest of the line, was seduced by a chambermaid in the embassy in Prague. Afterward he was blackmailed. Sir Geoffrey Harrison, some years back, also went to bed with a KGB maid when he was ambassador in Moscow. (Russian and Czech vamps, dumpling-fed and pasty-faced, are no great test of masculine self-control, but let that pass.) About a dozen more traitor-diplomats are to be revealed, according to Nigel West, a persistent researcher into this grim subject. Among those who feel that investigative journalism has already gone far enough is Stuart Hampshire, the philosopher and warden of Wadham College, Oxford. During the war he had been in intelligence, and associated with Anthony Blunt, who was no diplomat but a recruiter of Soviet agents in Britain. Hampshire was shown the draft of an article for one of the quality papers mentioning this friendship, which he felt was—mark this—"genteel British McCarthyism, playing on guilt by association." So he pulled strings ("a persuasive friend remonstrated with the acting editor") and had the article stopped. This edifying story of censorship was told by Hampshire himself in a letter to the *Times*. The letter concluded with the specious argument that exposure demoralizes the security services—the same argument, ironically, that has so often been advanced by those who have wished to keep the lid on the dirty tricks of the CIA. So long as influential people like Hampshire call for silence—in Hampshire's words in the *Times*, for "a halt to the selling of newspapers with the aid of speculative spy stories"—the suspicion increases that further important political decisions will be shown to have been made at the mercy of men serving the interests of a nation other than their own.

IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE, appeasement of the Soviets ran as deep as its Siamese twin—appeasement of the Nazis. One of its ugliest consequences was the handing over after the war of large numbers of White Russians and Cossacks, including women and children. The Foreign Office knew that these wretches would be fed into the Gulag. One of the diplomats implementing the murderous sell-out was Geoffrey Wilson. From 1940 to 1942 he had been in the embassy in Moscow, rising to be First Secretary until posted back to London. "I want to get to Moscow again for a bit," he then wrote to the Ambassador in Moscow. "My faith grows weak here and I find that it revives in Moscow and when I can wander about in Russia." Nikolai Tolstoy, who quotes this in his book, *The Secret Betrayal, 1944-1947* (Scribner's), presumes that "faith in Soviet integrity" was intended. Wilson, who is now Sir Geoffrey and has been chairman of Oxfam since 1977, maintains total silence when asked to comment on his past. Consequences of Nazi appeasement are to be found in Martin Gilbert's *Auschwitz and the Allies* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston). In 1944 it would have been feasible to bomb railways leading to the extermination camps (and also the crematoriums, which permitted hygenic disposal of the dead), but the Foreign Office blocked every recommendation to try and save Jewish lives by this practical policy. That hostile emotions were involved is shown in several memoranda. One from William Cavendish-Bentinck, chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, which was the liaison between the Foreign Office and the intelligence services, on August 27, 1943, states: "In my opinion, it is incorrect to describe Polish information regarding German atrocities as trustworthy. The Poles, and to a far greater extent the Jews, tend to exaggerage German atrocities in order to stoke us up."

ON BEHALF OF today's Foreign Office, Lord Carrington might show a similar disposition. At a private lunch given recently by a distinguished British Jew and Zionist, specifically to discuss Carrington's attitudes toward Jews, the host, knowing his guest did not much care to meet Jews, asked him why he had come. "You're different," was the interesting reply. The Foreign Minister's reputation for statesmanship rests upon the achievement of majority rule in Zimbabwe. This is ironical. It is no secret that the Thatcher government supported Bishop Muzorewa, had not foreseen a Mugabe victory, and was appalled by the prospect of it. But the world in its innocence broke out cheering, and the government had only to twist its grimace into a grin.

CHATHAM HOUSE is the leading institute for research into foreign affairs, and by amazing coincidence, its publications and programs accord with the Foreign Office. Edward Said is among the latest to have given a public address there, on Palestinian self-determination. On that topic he actually had little to say, except that everybody who is anybody in America supports it. Without it, he could promise war. Said is handsome, elegantly dressed, every inch the successful professor in his command of academic vocabulary and intonation. Whatever had been expected of him, he settles down instead to presenting Israel as a third world problem, meaning that Israelis must pack up and go, or be absorbed as a tolerated minority. They are there only thanks to others, first pre-1914 British colonialists, then U.S. imperialists. Israel's orders come from Washington, via a direct line running from Reagan through Begin and Sharon down to the governors of the West Bank. The role of Jews in making their own history is not acknowledged. Of the ugly and deep quarrel between Washington and Jerusalem, Said says nothing. It doesn't fit. The other side of the coin is that the Palestinians have been made to surrender their fate to others. Said intends to arouse the Palestinian will to struggle. Ordinary Palestinians have long since decided that they will not be led to the slaughter by intellectuals such as these and have resigned themselves to apathy. Said's representation of complex facts as conspiracy reinforces the self-pity which has fatally blighted the Palestinian cause. Applauding Said so whole-heartedly, these Foreign Office Arabisants, publicists, and sycophants are oblivious to the fact that it is their own moral and political ruin they are invited to enjoy.

David Pryce-Jones

David Pryce-Jones is the author of *Paris and the Third Reich: A History of the German Occupation* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston).

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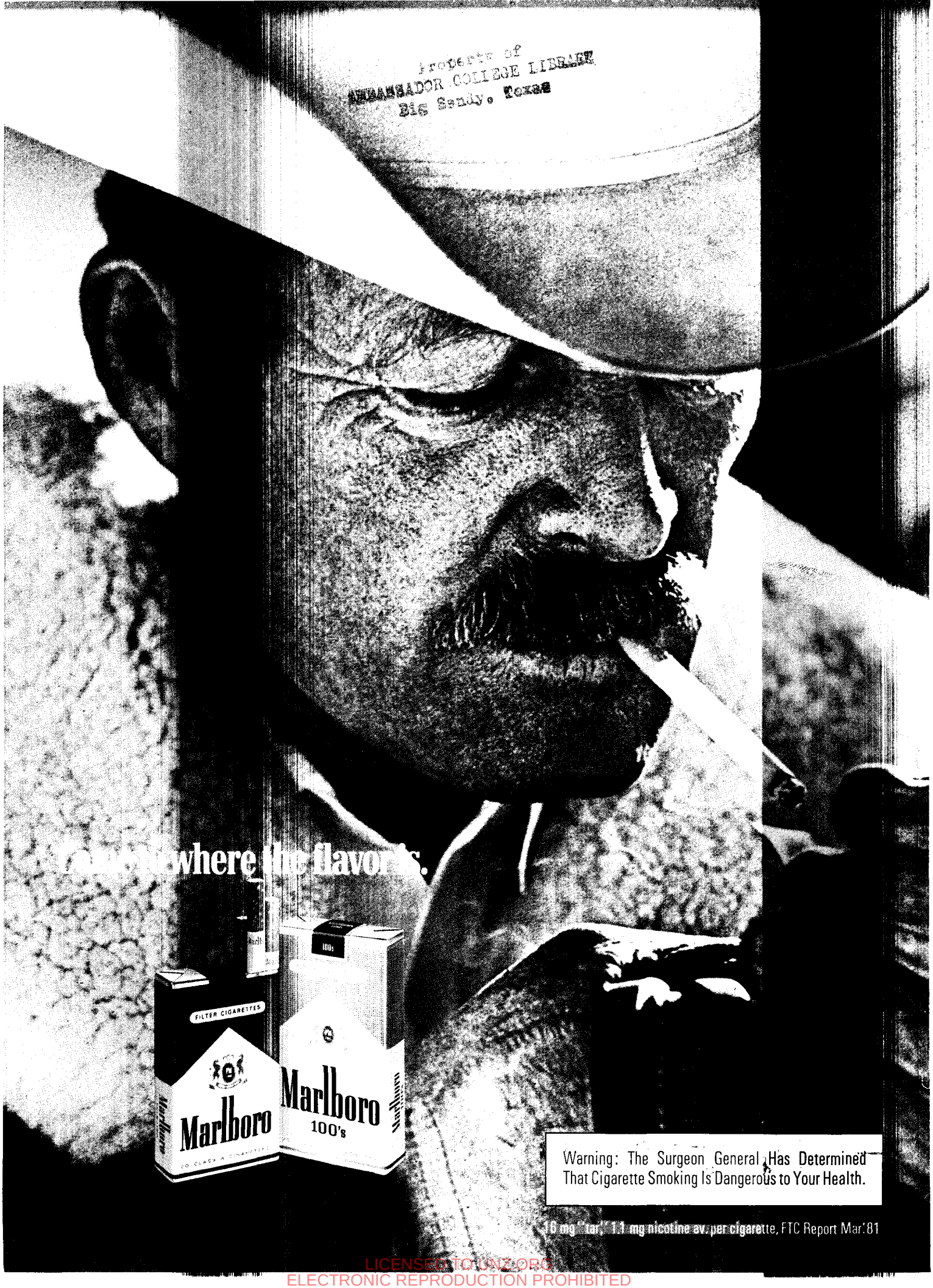

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